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THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE ISLAND PRINCESS;" "THE DESERTED WIFE;" &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROPOSALS.

> And he loved her—loved her certes,
> As he loved all heavenly objects with uplifted eyes and hands;
> As he loved pure inspirations—loved the graces—loved the muses,
> In a love content with writing its own name on desert sands.
> E. B. BROWNING.

"General Sterne, I am deeply sensible of the honor you would confer upon me, sir—even while I am constrained to decline it."

"Miss Paule, permit me to hope that this is not your *final* answer?"

"General Sterne, suffer *me* to hope that you will not again put me to the pain of seeming ungrateful for the distinction you would confer upon me."

"Then I have nothing to hope!"

"For making me so largely your debtor—no, sir."

This conversation took place between General Sterne and Honora Paule upon the morning of the proposed departure of his excellency.

Madam Auderly had been quite correct in her conjectures relative to the motives that brought the governor to Piedmont. General Sterne had known Honora Paule for the two years previous. He had been pleased with her from the first, and his regard had steadily increased. He had come to Piedmont with the purpose of proposing for her hand, and had embraced every opportunity afforded by his week's sojourn to push his interests with his inamorata.

Godfrey had seen his course with pain.

To put a final end to the affair, Honora Paule had this morning given General Sterne the interview he had so intensely desired and perseveringly sought.

And thus, as has been shown, she received and courteously declined his proposal.

And quite as courteously, the rejected suitor accepted his fate, and bade adieu to the lady and her family.

But not for a moment was Honora deceived by his suavity. She cought the quick, and quickly withdrawn, dark, fiery glance of hatred shot beneath his black brows, at Godfrey Dulanie and at herself. And she felt that the keen eyes of jealousy had detected a fact hidden from all but herself.

"There are men," she reflected, "who, being kindly rejected as lovers, may be retained as friends; but this man is not one of these! I have made a mortal enemy of Governor Sterne."

In this opinion, certainly, the heads of the family coincided.

"Oh, Honora, Honora, my child, what have you done? General Sterne has departed in high displeasure! I see it even under all his politeness! Oh, Honora, what have you done?" inquired Madam Auderly, as she sat alone with her granddaughter in the parlor, after the exit of her guest.

"Nothing that should disturb the equanimity of his excellency! I have gratefully declined his alliance—that is all."

"Oh, Honora! Honora! to have rejected so lofty a social position, with all the advantages and emoluments it might have enabled you to heap upon your family and friends! Oh, Honora! you have no ambition!" said the old lady, lifting up both her hands in rebuke, "Oh, Honora! you have no ambition!"

"On the contrary, my dear grandmother, AMBITION is my besetting sin! I crave distinction with a sinful craving!"

"And yet you rejected this high destiny?"

"The distinction I crave must be a purely personal one! must develop from within me, and must be my own! Should an emperor take my hand and seat me beside him upon the throne to share his empire, I should not call *that* distinction! I should call it an accident or an emperor's caprice! But should I, striving side by side, in the battle of life, with one I honored, win victory and dominion——" Honora paused and caught her breath at the vividness and splendor of the future her imagination conjured up.

"Romantic girl! well! you are but eighteen. But oh, Honora, you have not only lost a high position, but you have made a powerful enemy. Child, had you no fear?"

"None! General Sterne is at least an *honorable* enemy."

"Girl! girl! the enmity that grows from jealousy is *never* honorable—it is secretive, unjust, vindictive, and much to be feared! No man of your race, Honora, need ever expect political preferment or official favor, if Governor Sterne has the power to intercept or withhold it!"

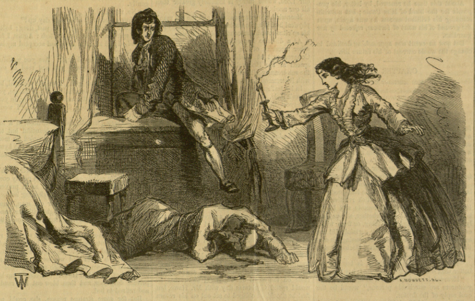
"Well!" said Honora, yawning and laughing, "as none of my friends are seeking office, they will not be likely to need political advancement, and as none of them have offended against the majesty of the laws, they will not be likely to pray in vain the executive clemency!"

But, immediately after uttering these last words, the whole aspect of the speaker changed—she suddenly paused, grew pale, and shuddered. She thought of the astrologer's prophecy.

"Why Honora, my child! what ails you?" asked the old lady.

"Nothing—nothing—a sudden shiver—that is all! there, it is over now!" said the young girl, with a great effort regaining her composure.

The conversation ceased there, as Madam Auderly withdrew to attend to her affairs.



AGNES DARKE DISCOVERING THE MURDER OF OLD MR. HAWE

And oefore many years had passed, with what bitterness Honora Paule remembered the girlish scorn with which she had received the idea of ever seeking political advancement, or needing executive favor!

Much relieved by the departure of his powerful rival, Godfrey Dulanie continued the favored and happy guest of Piedmont. Early every morning he rode out on horseback with Honora and her cousins; but before the ride was over he was almost sure to find himself tete-a-tete with Honora, being either in advance or in the rear of the riding party. During the later hours of the forenoon he entertained the young ladies by reading aloud to them while they worked at their embroidery frames; but before the reading was over he was almost certain to find himself in warm and confidential discussion with Honora alone—one after another of the girls having withdrawn upon some slight pretext.

Why did the Misses Auderly act in this manner?

First, because with the quick perception of womanhood they had seen the growing attachment between Godfrey and Honora.—Secondly, because with the unreasoning sensibility of girlhood, they really sympathized with the lovers.—Thirdly, because being themselves somewhat worldly, they could feel no possible jealousy of their cousin's handsome though penniless admirer.

Thus every facility was afforded Mr. Dulanie for advancing his interests with the noble Honora. Did he avail himself of his opportunities?

We all know how persuasive an advocate is Hope when we once admit her to our counsels. Godfrey Dulanie did not understand the overweening pride of the heads of the family with whom he sojourned—that pride which, in treating him upon equal terms, ignored the very possibility of his aspiration to an alliance with any daughter of the house. He only felt that every rational encouragement was held out to him.

He reviewed the circumstances—Madam Auderly and Colonel Shannon exhibited towards him the utmost degree of kindness and respect. The Misses Auderly tacitly recognized him as the suitor of their cousin. Honora herself reciprocated his regard—he knew it by the "secret sympathy" of their yet unspoken love.

Yet still he hesitated! How could he, a poor and struggling young man, venture to propose for the hand of her, the richest heiress in the State, without exposing himself to the charge of mercenary motives, abuse of hospitality and gross ingratitude? Oh that Honora were poor or himself rich!

Meanwhile the day of his departure for Richmond drew near.

It was the evening previous to the morning upon which he purposed to leave Piedmont.

Madam Auderly and Colonel Shannon had retired.

The young people were promenading upon the long vine-shaded piazza in front of the house. But one by one they dropped off into the drawing-room, until at length, as usual, Godfrey Dulanie found himself alone with Honora Paule. Their conversation upon indifferent matters had died out—each being indisposed to speak upon subjects that concerned neither. The near departure of Godfrey occupied the thoughts and oppressed the hearts of both. An almost irresistible impulse tempted him to speak—to tell her at least of the love that filled his heart, and the scruples that withheld him from asking her hand. But then he thought—such a course of conduct would give him the appearance of throwing himself upon her generosity, an attitude not to be thought of for an instant.

"No! no!" he mentally exclaimed, "though my heart swell to bursting, it must be silent! silent!"

Meanwhile Honora, her hand trembling upon his arm, read his soul as an open book. Her own deep love gave her to feel the profundity of his passion—her own delicate sense of honor gave her to understand the fastidiousness of his scruples. Could her secret prayer have annihilated those scruples they would have disappeared. But she—a maiden—might pray, but must not breathe aloud the meaning of her prayer—no! not to save both their hearts from lifelong misunderstanding and estrangement. And he, knowing this, would he, could he depart, without using his masculine privilege of confessing his love, so that her own, unblamed, might meet and bless it? Was there then no innocent womanly wile by which she might beguile from him the words he longed to speak, she longed to hear, yet which he ventured not to utter? She thought of Desdemona, of Miranda, and of Juliet, who, it must be confessed, met their lovers considerably more than half way. But there was something in her nature that repelled the first suggestions of artifice. In its simple, majestic truth, her mind resembled the Ionic column—pure, white, stately, upright, unswerving. She could even more easily have said—"Godfrey, speak to me for I love you"—than she would have used any feminine arts to draw such a declaration from him.

While these various thoughts and feelings occupied the lovers, they pursued their walk up and down the vine-shaded piazza. There was no light save that of stars that occasionally twinkled through the dew-sprinkled foliage on the front side, and the faint gleam of the lamps through the closed shutters of the drawing-room on the other side. They continued to walk on in silence, her hand trembling upon his arm, its motion felt and re-echoed from his heart.

Feeling the temptation to clasp her to his bosom, and pour the history of his great love into her ear, growing every instant stronger, becoming almost irresistible,—and wishing above all things to preserve his integrity, he resolved to put an immediate period to the interview. Pausing, therefore, in his promenade, he said—-

"Miss Paule, forgive my thoughtlessness, I have detained you too long exposed to the damp evening air."

"Oh, no, no," began Honora; but her deep tones vibrated as the chords of an æolian harp when swept by the wind, and died away in silence.

"Suffer me to lead you in, and to bid you—farewell!"

"Farewell!" she echoed in a thrilling voice—"Oh! surely not yet, farewell? We shall see you to-morrow morning?"

"Ah, no! Colonel Shannon has kindly placed a horse and groom at my service, and I depart at day-break to meet the stage at Altamont," he answered mournfully, as he led her towards the hall door. Arrived thither he paused, took her hand respectfully, and held it while he said—

"Honora, suffer me to thank you for all the kindness you have shown towards 'a poor. wayfaring' young man,—to acknowledge most gratefully all the faith, hope and strength with which you have inspired him,—to bless you, Honora, and to say—farewell forever!"—He lifted her throbbing hand to his lips, pressed upon it a burning kiss, resigned it and turned away.

"*Godfrey!*"

It was only his name, breathed in a low voice, by Honora Paule; but all the deep, passionate emotion of her soul, vibrated along its syllables.

> "Oh there are looks and tones that dart,
> An instant sunshine through the heart,
> As if the soul that moment caught,
> A something it through life had sought!'

"Honora! Honora!" he responded. He was at her side, at her feet in an instant. And then and there the sealed fountain of love was set free. He told her all!—his youthful dream of the ideal woman who should be the companion of his life; his meeting with her in the church; his recognising her as his ideal; his mistaking her, through the simplicity of her dress and manner, for some poor though noble girl, whom he resolved to seek out and woo· his despair on discovering her to be an heiress; his vain struggle with his growing love; and final resolution to depart without declaring his feelings; and last of all, that little touch of true nature which had melted the seal of silence from his heart.

She heard him out and then broke forth in eloquent reply. She asked how it was possible that he, understanding her nature, as he claimed to do, should suppose her incapable of misconstruing his motives; or how it happened that he, indifferent to accidents of fortune as he professed to be, should yet affix so much importance to her possession of wealth as to make that circumstance an obstacle to a good understanding between them?

He smiled, and said—

"Your straigthforward, trenchant nature, noble girl, would cut the gordian knot, rather than untie it. Well, dearest Honora! all that I have to offer you, is an *upright* heart that has never swerved from rectitude; a *virgin* heart that has never before bowed before the shrine of womanhood; a *constant* heart through good and ill, for time and for eternity, is wholly yours. Years may pass, dearest girl, before I shall be in a position to claim this coveted hand; and to ask you to contract yourself in so long and uncertain an engagement would be ungenerous; therefore, dearest Honora, while I bind myself irrevocably to you as my liege lady, I would fain leave you unfettered by any promise."

"As if I would consent to so one-sided and unjust an engagement! No, Godfrey! my nature demands that every engagement to which I may be a party must be justly proportioned, clearly defined, well understood. I am not yet my own mistress. I am a minor, and belong in some sense to my grandmother and uncle. I could not under any circumstances marry without their consent. Go to them therefore, to-morrow, dear Godfrey, and make known our engagement, and solicit their sanction."

"You permit me to do this, dear, candid girl!"

"Duty commands us to take this straightforward course, dear Godfrey! But now it is time that we should separate for the evening—Good night! I will not say good bye?"

"Good night! good night! may all good angels guard and bless you! noble girl! dearest Honora!" he exclaimed, pressing her hand to his lips in passionate ardor, and then respectfully handing her through the hall door.

And Honora sought her pillow, not to sleep;—but to lie dreaming "love's young dream."

And for hours longer Godfrey paced up and down the vine-shaded piazza in a dizzy trance of joy. Then sought his couch to dream of—Honora?

CHAPTER IX.

ASKING IN MARRIAGE.

> Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
> Could ever hear by tale or history,
> The course of true love never did run smooth
> * * * * * * *
> If, then, true lovers have been ever crossed,
> It stands as an edict in destiny:
> Then let us teach our trial patience. SHAKSPEARE.

"Sur! Mr. Dew-rainy, sur!—Sur, it is time to get up, sur! De day's done broke, sur! an' de hosses is ready, sur! And Aunt Ruby, sur—she done got a cup o' hot coffee in wance o' de family breakfas' for you, sur!—Sur! Mr. Dew-rainy, sir—'deed it's time to get up, sur!" So rapped and called Zerubbabel, making a tremendous noise at the chamber door, and waking Godfrey from a delicious dream of going to house-keeping with Honora.

He immediately sprang out of bed, and admitted his early attendant.

"Well, is this you, Zerubbabel?"

"Yes, please sur; an' here's hot water to shave, an' day's broke, an' your coffee's waitin', an' de hosses too!"

"Well, well, Zerubbabel—let the horses be put back into the stable. I shall not go this morning. But tell me—what time does the colonel rise?"

"'Bout an hour from this, sur."

"Very well. Let them know down stairs that I shall not go this morning; and do you come to me at the end of an hour from this to take a note to the colonel.

"Yes, sur," said the boy, departing.

Godfrey proceeded to make his morning toilet, and afterwards to write a note, explaining that circumstances had arisen to delay his departure for a few hours, and begging the favor of an interview with Colonel Shannon, at the earliest convenience of the latter. This he sealed, and sent by his sable attendant to the bedside of his host.

Colonel Shannon immediately returned a verbal answer, to the effect that he would be happy to see Mr. Dulanie in his study directly after breakfast.

Soon after receiving this reply Godfrey went down stairs and joined the family at their morning meal.

Madam Auderly politely expressed her satisfaction at having the pleasure of her guest's society for some time longer. And the young ladies rallied him unmercifully for losing his journey by—as they said—oversleeping himself. Honora, as usual, calm, simple, and stately, neither said nor did anything to betray herself.

Colonel Shannon, evidently moved by curiosity to know what the young gentleman could have to say to him in private, and far from suspecting the truth, was the first to retire from the breakfast room.

Colonel Shannon's study was the little front room on the second floor, immediately over the entrance hall.

Thither Godfrey repaired, to find the colonel already awaiting him.

The old gentleman arose and tendered a seat.

The young man declined it with a bow, and standing before his host, opened the subject of his visit. In a simple, manly, and dignified manner, he declared his love for Honora Paule, and his desire to make her his wife.

Colonel Shannon sat back in his chair, and gazed up at Godfrey Dulanie with incredulous astonishment.

That *he*, a poor student of law, should aspire to the alliance of Honora Paule—that he should venture to confess such flagrant presumption—that he should even dare to request him, her guardian, to sanction such high audacity—struck him with consternation!

He sat perfectly dumbfounded and staring at the suitor.

Under that regard of arrogant amazement, Godfrey Dulanie felt his high spirit rising.

"Well, Colonel Shannon, I await your answer!" he said, with calm dignity.

But the colonel stared on, in blank panic, finding no terms in which to reply.

Mr. Dulanie was fast losing his patience. Nevertheless he still controlled himself, and after a moment said quietly—

"Colonel Shannon, I beg to remind you, sir, that I have just had the honor to lay before you certain proposals, authorized by Miss Paule, and which await your answer."

"My answer, sir! Sir, I am thunderstruck, sir! I am overwhelmed with consternation, sir! Honora Paule, sir?—do you happen to know who she *is*, sir? Are you aware of her social position sir? of her high pretensions sr? of her briilliant prospects, sir?"

"Colonel Shannon, I believe that I am fully aware of all the circumstances which you have taken the pains to bring to my recollection. Furthermore, I know Miss Paule; and knowing, love her; and loving, desire to make her my wife," said the young man with stately courtesy.

"Then, sir, I can only repeat that I am amazed, sir!—yes, sir, astounded, sir!—yes, sir, thunderstruck, sir, at your effrontery, sir!"

"Allow me to recall to you, Colonel Shannon, the fact that Miss Paule herself has authorized the proposals that I have the honor to submit to you."

"Sir, you leave me *without words* to express myself!"

"Pardon me for observing that that is no answer to my proposal. Allow me to state it afresh: I love your ward, Miss Paule; I request your sanction to my engagement with her; and I attend for your answer," said Godfrey Dulanie, with great dignity.

"My answer, sir! You cannot for a moment be at a loss for it, sir. Marry Honora Paule, sir? No, sir! *assuredly not*, sir! *most assuredly not*, sir! I tell you that—that I stand appalled at the question!"

"Very well! having at length received a distinct answer, I have only to wish you good morning, Colonel," said the young man, bowing, somewhat ironically.

Colonel hannon now in some degree recovered himself; recollected what became him as a host, and what was due Mr. Dulanie as his guest. Rising, he said, rather inconsistently, and perhaps somewhat sarcastically—

"Yes, sir! Miss Paule's family, of course, feel highly honored by the very flattering proposal you have made them; and they regret very much that for many cogent reasons they should be forced to decline the *distinction* you designed them. Good morning, sir," the colonel concluded, rather abruptly, seeing, in fact, that Mr. Dulanie, deeply disgusted, was not disposed to attend the continuation of his speech.

Godfrey bowed once more, and withdrew. Assured of Honora's love, he cared very little for her guardian's unreasonable opposition. A few years, he knew, if they did not bring Colonel Shannon to a more rational and humane view of the case, would, at least, enfranchise Honora from his authority.

With these hopeful feelings he went down stairs and sought her presence. As his "audacious proposal" had not yet been bruited through the family, no opposition was made to their meeting.

He found Honora in the midst of her cousins, in the family sitting-room. He greeted the ladies, and took his seat among them. And for a while all conversed gayly and pleasantly.

But presently Miss Jessie called Miss Rose to help her bind up a honeysuckle vine that was drooping from the piazza, and Miss Lily volunteered to render her assistance also; and, as usual, Honora and Godfrey were left tete-a-tete.

He went to her side, and took her hand.

She looked up inquiringly into his face.

He smiled mournfully.

"Well, Godfrey?"

"Well, dearest Honora, I this morning availed myself of your permission to lay my hopes before Colonel Shannon."

"And the result?"

"Was what we might have anticipated—a rejection of my suit." Godfrey refrained from saying how scornful and insulting this rejection had been.

"Well, what matters it? It was our duty to have no concealments from my guardian, but to make known to him at once our purposes. I even expected his opposition; it is of no real importance; for though while I am rightfully under his authority, I will of course obey him—yet, when I am my own mistress, I shall follow the rational dictates of my own mind. In three years from next Christmas I shall have reached my legal majority—shall be mistress of myself and of my fortune. At the end of that time, dear Godfrey, you will claim me as your wife; and until that time regard me as your betrothed!" she said, and frankly held out her hand.

He caught and pressed it to his heart. Then he took from around his neck a little black ribbon, with a slender gold ring attached to it.

"This, dear Honora, was my mother's wedding-ring. She, in dying, placed it on my finger, and bade me wear it until I should transfer it to my betrothed. I wore it on my hand until my finger outgrew it; then I attached it to this ribbon, and wore it around my neck. Will you suffer me now to obey my mother's behest, and place it upon the finger of my betrothed?"

"Yes; and the pledge shall be as sacred as if placed there in the church by the minister of God," said Honora, solemnly, holding out her left hand.

He slipped the ring upon the third finger, lifted the lovely hand to his lips for an instant and resigned it.

"Honora, I may write to you?" he inquired.

"Assuredly; unless our correspondence should be forbidden by my guardian, in which case we must submit and be patient, I suppose. The years will wear around at last."

Again her hand was lifted, and pressed warmly to his lips, and dropped abruptly—for, lo! Madam Auderly, with severe aspect, appeared within the door!—Madam Auderly, who had just learned from Colonel Shannon "the audacious proposals of Mr. Dulanie." She entered, nodding stiffly, took her seat, drew her knitting work from her ample pocket, and began steadily and silently to ply her needles. No more opportunity of private conversation was afforded the lovers.

In half an hour from that time Godfrey Dulanie bade adieu to the family; and declining the proffer of a horse and groom, sat out to walk up to Altamont, which he reached by noon, and whence he sent a messenger to Piedmont to fetch his luggage.

And by the next morning's stage Mr. Dulanie journeyed towards Charlottesville, which he reached in due time.

It had been agreed between Madam Auderly and Colonel Shannon that it would be the best policy to refrain from mentioning to Honora the subject of her discarded lover—that he might perchance be the more easily forgotten. So Honora was left in peace.

And when the next mail-day brought her a letter from Godfrey, with several other epistles—for Honora had quite an extensive correspondence among her late school-mates—it escaped notice. And when she answered it, and gave the answer with other similar looking missives into the hands of the mail messenger, the act escaped comment. In short, though Honora disdained to make a secret of the fact, yet either because her guardians did not really know of its existence, or that they did not think it politic to draw the chains of authority too tightly around her, or else because they had absolute confidence in her integrity, or for whatever reason, it is certain that the correspondence was not interfered with.

There were but two mails a week at Altamont. By every Monday's mail she received a letter from her lover; and by every Thursday's mail she replied to it.

Their letters were faithful transcripts of their daily lives. Thus Honora knew and shared the arduous labors, hopes and aspirations of Godfrey at the university; and Godfrey enjoyed with Honora the sweetness of her quiet rural days. Her life was made more earnest by her sympathy with his mental toils; and his studies were enlivened, his hopes revived, and his strength renewed by her tender affection, unswerving constancy, and inspiring faith.

* * * * * *

It was at the next annual commencement, and just twelve months from the period of his first acquaintance with Honora Paule, that Godfrey Dulanie graduated with the highest honors of the university, and was soon after admitted to the bar of Richmond—then, as now, one of the most exclusive in the world.

His debut before the court was one of the most brilliant in the annals of the bar.

The fame of his splendid talents had preceded him to the metropolis; and he was retained by the defendants in a civil suit of vast importance, upon the issue of which untold wealth pended, and in which already the highest legal talent of the commonwealth was on either side opposed. Mr. Dulanie, in addition to his other great advantages, possessed the supreme one of faith in the justice of his client's cause. The suit was long pending. Some of the most renowned lawyers, whose names now grace the great national forum, and the archives of foreign diplomacy, were his colleagues. Their speeches—models of judicial oratory—preceded his own. But he had the reviewing of the case—the closing speech.

And his address to the jury was not only a master-piece of legal knowledge, sound logic, and moving eloquence—it was an overwhelming power, a magnificent triumph!

Without leaving their seats the jury returned a verdict for the defendants. And all knew that the cause was saved by this splendid young orator, who had burst as a new sun upon the world.

His success was an ovation! His brother lawyers gathered around him with congratulations. Briefs crowded in upon him; gold flowed to his coffers; and, above all, his clients—widows and orphans saved from ruin—blessed him in their nightly prayers.

In all this, of what did he think most frequently?

Honora! Honora! for *her* his bays were won!

In his regular correspondence with her, of course, the subject of the pending trial was occasionally mentioned; but when, at last, it closed with such glorious victory for him, he alluded to the event only slightly and modestly, until, at last, Honora wrote to him:

> "Your praises reach me from an hundred quarters. Oh, *churl!* to deny me the rightful share in your triumphs! I enjoin you to send me a full report of that trial, with your closing speech. *Dry* do you call it! I will have it all—to the utmost syllable! I will not be defrauded of a single 'whereas' or 'aforesaid.' And while you are making up the packet, send me also the paper containing the account of the public dinner that was given you by the members of the bar. Ah! you see your Honora is exacting—she will not be mulct of a moiety of her dues!"

More than all the plaudits of the forum he prized this little letter. He pressed it to his lips; he wore it next to his heart.

Meanwhile, for him, success followed success with dazzling rapidity. He would not touch an unjust cause; but a just one in his hands was sure of triumph.

At the close of the court term he turned his attention to politics, the twin sister of law. He embraced the interests of Mr. W——, the Richmond candidate of his own party for the Senate; but as his own person, fame, and eloquence became known to the people, his name was caught up and advanced as a candidate for the House of Representatives; and borne on the swelling tide of popular favor, he was himself elected to a seat in the national legislature.

About this time he renewed, by letter, his proposals for the hand of Miss Paule; but notwithstanding his brilliant success he was again, upon the ground of his want of fortune, rejected by her guardian.

But now an event was approaching destined to change the whole current of his future life.

CHAPTER X.

THE MIDNIGHT CRY.

On every lip a speechless horror dwelt;
On every brow, the burthen of affliction;
The old ancestral spirits knew and felt
The house's malediction! THOMAS HOOD.

Our narrative now approaches one of those awful events that not unfrequently, in this world of ours, fall, electrifying a calm neighborhood with consternation and terror—even as in some regions a thunderbolt is hurled down from a cloudless sky, scattering wide destruction!

From a heaven as fair as ever shone with fruitful promise, fell this thunderbolt to one hearth!

Success is the worldly measure of worth. The brilliant success of Godfrey Dulanie had produced its natural effect upon his churlish relative, old Hugh Hawe, dwelling in his remote and lonely home at Hawe's Hole. Now whether, as was likely, the old man's mind was failing, or from whatever cause it might have been, he certainly did not act with his habitual caution in expressing his sentiments; but to his frequent visitor, Doctor Henry, he would often say—

"Ah ha! that puppy, Godfrey, is turning out better than one could have expected, hey?"

"Hem-m! let us hope that it is so, sir; but adventurers are unreliable persons," would be the cool reply of the doctor.

Whereupon old Hugh Hawe would secretly turn upon his nephew a keen glance, from under the covert of his bushy brows, reading his very soul.

At another time he said—

"Bravo, Henry! I congratulate you! *Your cousin* Godfrey is getting on! His gaining of the Goldsborough suit is said to be one of the greatest triumphs of the season."

"Hem-m, yes, sir; though, for my own part, I should think that reckless young man quite as likely to *die* by the law, as to *live* by it!" dryly returned Doctor Henry.

"Take care, lad! 'Evil prophecies, like chickens, often come home to roost!'"

Again, a few months after, he exclaimed—

"Ha, Henry! wish me joy! *My grandson*, Mr. Dulanie, has been elected to a seat in the House of Representatives. He will be a distinguished man yet!"

"This old wretch is certainly getting into his dotage! He must be humored and taken care of, or to the demon with my prospects of being his heir! If this goes on a month longer, he will destroy the testament he has made in my behalf, and make another in favor of his precious grandson!—or else die intestate, in which case this 'all-praised' Godfrey is heir at law!" thought Dr. Henry, but he replied—

"I do, from the bottom of my heart, congratulate you, sir, upon an event that none of us had any reason to anticipate. And I hope that it may end happily. I must in all candor confess, however, that his sudden abandonment of his legitimate profession for a political career, does not speak well for his stability of purpose."

Another keen, covert side-glance from under the bushy brows, and the old man perused the speaker's thoughts as the lines of a printed page.

From the evening upon which this conversation occurred, Hugh Hawe's health of mind and body declined.

Doctor Henry redoubled his attentions to the invalid, and at the same time reported everywhere that his days were numbered—that no art of medicine could prolong his life, or do more than modify his sufferings.

Affairs went on in this manner for some weeks longer, when old Hugh Hawe, with the caprice of illness, suddenly dismissed his nephew from professional attendance upon him, and declared that none should prescribe for him except young Doctor Heine, who had lately received his diploma as a physician. The ostensible reason given by the old man for this strange step was, that a change of physicians and of treatment was often good for the ailing; and to soothe the smarting of this wound to Doctor Henry's self-love, he said that he should always be very happy to see his nephew "as a friend, unprofessionally."

But Doctor Henry, in his bitter mortification, let fall some words of complaint, that provoked from the sick man the astounding retort of—

"Sir, I would be attended by a physician who is not too deeply interested in my *death!*"

Silenced by this reply, which the doctor professed to ascribe to the infatuations of dotage, he repressed all evidences of his deep feeling of humiliation, and, taking the old man at his former word, actually continued to visit him as a friend. Every one who heard of this change of physicians ascribed the conduct of old Hugh Hawe to the caprice of dotage, and characterized the act as one of extreme injustice; for Dr. Henry's acknowledged skill as a physician was only equaled by his great personal popularity.

But strangely enough, and doubtless from another caprice—to wit, of nature—from the day of Doctor Henry's dismissal, the old man, under the medical charge of young Doctor Heine, and the tender nursing of gentle Agnes Darke, rapidly convalesced.

And not only restoration of health to mind and body, but regeneration of spirit, seemed possible for this octogenarian forgetter of God. His better thoughts were, under divine providence, mainly due to the sweet influence of his orphan ward. Daily and nightly the prayers of gentle Agnes ascended for the poor old man, for whom no other living creature prayed, that time might be granted him to prepare for the great change; that the root of bitterness might be drawn from his heart; that he might be led to "repentance not to be repented of;" that his soul might be saved alive. Daily she read to him from the holy Scriptures, and daily she presented in her own lovely life, the beauty of Christianity—an example more powerful than the most eloquent precepts, for the purposes of conversion. In her pious efforts, this meek follower of the Saviour was aided both by Dr. Heine and by Mr. Willoughby, who, at the old man's express desire, came often to see him. Old as Hugh Hawe was, it was pitiable to witness his anxiety to get well and to live longer.

"I am eighty-two years old, but I am so much better that—who knows?—I may live to be ninety-two, or even an hundred. If I could live twenty years longer, how hard I should work to unravel the web of evil I have woven; but it is vain to hope it, and if I were to give my body to be burned, I could not give satisfaction!" he said despairingly to Agnes, for only to that gentle girl did he speak with perfect freedom.

"Oh, sir!" she replied, "you know that our Heavenly Father accepts the disposition for the deed. Sincere repentance is the only satisfaction we can any of us ever make, and it is received of our Lord, whose mercy is infinitely greater than all our needs."

Meanwhile winter approached, and the old man's physical health again fluctuated unfavorably, while his spiritual condition continued to improve.

At a distance important events, interesting to other members of his family, were progressing. Congress met at Washington, where the maiden speech of the Honorable Godfrey Dulanie upon the sub-treasury bill, electrified the whole country with its tremendous power.

In his leathern arm-chair, in his sick chamber at Hawe's Hole, old Hugh Hawe heard the report of this great triumph, and put on his spectacles to read the speech.

"That boy knew what he was about when he went to college. He was right, and I was wrong! A hard admission for an old man of eighty two to make, eh, Agnes? Agnes, my dear, I do greatly desire to be at peace with all men. Take a pen and ink, my child, and write to Mr. Dulanie, and desire him from me to come down, if there should be a recess at Christmas, and spend the week with his old grandfather at Hawe's Hole."

The young girl joyfully obeyed, and the letter was written, and was, that same forenoon, dispatched to Altamont post-office.

In due time the answer arrived. Mr. Dulanie could not say whether there would be a recess at Christmas; but, in any case, he would comply with his grandfather's request, and come down, if it were only for one day.

Satisfied with this promise, the old man became tranquil. And now another letter came, announcing to him that Mr. Dulanie would arrive at the Hole on the night of Christmas Eve; that he would spend Christmas day with Mr. Hawe, but that he should be obliged to set out on his return to Washington on the morning of the twenty-sixth. This prospect of so soon seeing his grandson filled the heart of the failing man with childish delight. And in the softness of his mood he pitied his old favorite, Dr. Henry, and, as usual, imparted his sentiments to Agnes Darke, saying—

"My dear, I am afraid that I have been at heart unjust to poor Henry, and if so, how *very* unjust! My dear, I distrust my own judgment. Better to err on the side of charity, is it not? At least I must have a candid interview with him, put things upon a right footing, and have my purposes clearly understood. Take your pen, my dear, and write a note, and ask Henry to come over here as soon as possible, for that I am anxious to see him."

Agnes immediately complied, and the note was dispatched by a messenger. After an absence of two hours, the man returned with the answer that Doctor Henry was absent, and would not be at home again for several days, but that he had left the note with Mrs. Henry.

Doctor Henry, in fact, reached home on the evening of the twenty-third of December, and on the morning of the next day—Christmas eve—he hastened over to Hawe's Hole to obey the call of the old man.

The uncle and nephew were closeted for several hours in a confidential interview, at the end of which Dr. Henry came out of the chamber with a gloomy and abstracted brow, mounted his horse, and instantly rode home.

That same night, according to appointment, Godfrey Dulanie arrived. The old man welcomed him with cordial friendship, had a long and confidential conversation with him, detaining him in his chamber until long after midnight, and, in fact, until Godfrey, fearing to injure him by keeping him from sleep, insisted upon retiring to his own room.

The next day being Christmas, and fine, genial weather for the season, old Hugh Hawe was dressed, and wheeled out in his chair to the parlor that adjoined his chamber, which was situated on the ground floor. He wished to meet his family—what were left of them—once more at a Christmas dinner-table.

There were present Dr. and Mrs. Henry, Mr. Dulanie and Agnes Darke. It was scarcely a merry Christmas feast; the old man, notwithstanding his age and decrepitude, was, perhaps, as cheerful as any of the others; Doctor Henry's hilarity was too hollow to be contagious, and his wife saw and sympathized with his mental disturbance; Godfrey Dulanie's thoughts were absent with Honora Paule; and Agnes Darke, whose gentle and pliable nature was all too subject to receive its coloring from the mood of those around her, sat silent and pensive.

As the mountain pass was very bad between Hawe's Hole and Farquier's Folly, and as the afternoons were short, it was necessary that, immediately after dinner, the doctor and his wife should set out for home.

After they had taken leave and departed, the old man, with Godfrey Dulanie and Agnes Darke, gathered around the fire, and, strange as it may appear, the three felt, in the absence of the others, a great weight lifted from their spirits. The hours were passed in cheerful conversation until Agnes went out to order tea; for it was necessary that the last meal should be early served, as the old man, greatly fatigued, was anxious to retire to bed, and Mr. Dulanie was under the necessity of leaving the same night for Altamont, to catch the early stage for Washington City.

Agnes was a thrifty little house-keeper, and under her auspices the supper was soon served.

When the meal was over and the table cleared off, the household servants were brought together, and, at the request of old Hugh Hawe, Godfrey Dulanie conducted the evening family worship.

"I wish you would see me in my bed before you depart, Godfrey," entreated the old man, who seemed to cling with childish weakness to the presence of his grandson.

"With pleasure, sir," replied Mr. Dulanie, rising to assist the old man.

"Good night, my dear Agnes! God bless and reward you for all your goodness!" he said, pressing the hand of his young nurse.

"Not good night yet, sir. I shall look in before retiring, to see that you are quite comfortable."

"Thank you, thank you, my dear," said Hugh Hawe, as, leaning on the strong arm of his grandson, he passed from the parlor into his chamber.

Godfrey assisted him in undressing, helped him into bed, and arranged his pillows and covering comfortably about him. Then, at the old man's request, he sat down beside him, and conversed until the clock struck ten, when he arose to take leave, and, with the promise to return at the first opportunity, and spend a week at the Hole, he shook hands with his grandfather, left the room, bade Agnes good bye, mounted the horse that stood awaiting his use, and rode off for Altamont.

After his departure, Agnes arose from her seat by the parlor fire, and passed into her guardian's room, according to promise, to see if he were comfortable. The old man was lying so quietly, with his eyes closed and his hands folded upon his breast, that she thought he was sleeping, and shaded the lamp with her hand, lest its glare should startle him. But he was already awake, and as she approached, he opened his eyes and said—

"I am not asleep, Agnes, my dear."

"Can I do anything for you, sir?" she inquired, gently.

"No, my child."

"How do you feel after your day up?"

"Better than for a long time past, dear; better in the spirit, as well as in the flesh; Agnes, I feel *satisfied*—I feel as if the Lord had accepted my late repentance."

"Doubtless he has, dear sir. Are you wakeful?—if so, shall I sit beside you and read, or sing you to sleep?"

"Thank you, dear girl. I am not wakeful, but inclined to sleep; nevertheless, if you please, you may sit by me for a few minutes, and sing, in your own sweet voice, your favorite hymn, 'I would not live alway.'"

Agnes seated herself, and commenced, in a low and tender key, to sing those beautiful but too pensive stanzas. The singing occupied no more than five or six minutes, and by the time the hymn was finished, the old man was in a deep and placid sleep.

She stooped over him to assure herself of this. His eyes were calmly closed; his lips gently compressed; his hands folded together as in prayer; his whole aspect serene as that of sleeping infancy.

"May the Lord bless the poor old man," murmured Agnes, as shading the light with her hand, she softly glided from the room, and closed the door behind her.

The fires were all out, the servants were all retired to their outside quarters; the house was solitary, silent and gloomy. Agnes secured the fastenings of the doors and windows, and then ascended to her own room, which was immediately over that of old Hugh Hawe. She offered up her private devotions, and then blew out her candle and retired to bed.

But for some strange reason, she could not sleep; never had the solitude, silence and gloom of the old house so oppressed her spirits. It was a starless, dark and cloudy winter night, and the sighing of the wind through the wild mountain gorges, and among the old beams and rafters of the gable roofs, sounded like the prophetic wailings of some household spirit. A vague presentiment of approaching evil, a deep impression of some atrocious agency drawing near, a dark overshadowing of some impending horror, weighed heavily upon her soul; a wild impulse to start up, to cry out, to fly from the lonely house, assailed her. In vain she reasoned, prayed and struggled to subdue this tremendous agitation of her spirits; for hours she turned and turned in wakeful terrors, or tossed about in frightful dreams. It must have been some time after midnight when she fell into the deep sleep of exhaustion from which she was terribly shocked—shocked by a single, prolonged, appalling cry of—

"*Mur-der!*"—

that rang through and through the lonely house, and out upon the silent night!

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHAMBER OF THE CRIME.

Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.
SHAKESPEARE.

With that appalling cry still ringing in her ear, Agnes sprang out of bed and stood upon the floor, shaking from head to foot.

Was it a dream?—that fearful shriek, pealing out upon the night, and then suddenly stifled as by suffocation?

For an instant that seemed an age she remained with every nerve acute with attention.

But all around her—the room, the house, the neighborhood were silent as death, and dark as the grave! From the thick black night without, no faintest ray of starlight came through the bare windows. In the death-like stillness of the house no lowest sound stirred.

Yes! hark! a voice that does but make the solitude and silence of the house and the hour the more dreadful, for it speaks of the lonest time of the night!—it is the voice of the old-fashioned, coffin-like clock, in the corner of the hall below stairs, as it slowly and sonorously strikes—ONE!—TWO! This is indeed the very "witching hour of night," for at midnight many people are yet astir; but at two o'clock the stillness of the world is like the stillness of a vault. Then almost to a minute, two hours after midnight, rang out that terrific shriek, that had not yet ceased to vibrate through her ear, and brain, and heart! All was again silent as the tomb. Yet Agnes shook as with an ague fit, and the cold sweat of mortal terror broke out upon her forehead. In one moment that seemed an eternity all the fearful features of her position started up before her. A young, slight, timid girl, alone after midnight in an old house in a fissure of the mountains. The negroes attached to the premises all buried in deep sleep in their distant cabins. No cry from that lone house could reach their ears, or reaching, could rouse them from their death-like sleep! What could be done? While she thought——

Hark! Heaven of heavens! what sound was that?

A low, subdued, floundering struggle, a half suffocated groan, and a fall!

It came from the room immediately under her own—from the chamber of old Hugh Hawe!

Paralyzed by terror, she stood for a moment, and then, at the thought of danger, of death, violent death, to the helpless old man below, all personal fear was conquered! Quickly striking a light, she hurried from the room out into the bleak passage way, down the windy staircase, and through the cheerless lower hall into the parlor.

So far all was yet dark and still—the feeble rays of her own taper making the darkness more "visible," the faint echo of her own footsteps making the silence more apparent.

She paused an instant in the parlor, which remained so exactly as it had been left, looked so quiet, wore such an aspect of domestic peace, that she could imagine no unholy disturbance near, and was almost persuaded to believe her alarm to have been a mere nightmare dream.

She opened the connecting door between the parlor and Mr. Hawe's chamber, and there——!!

Heavens and earth! what a vision was that which met her appalled gaze, froze the very blood in her veins, and turned her form to stone!

Prone on his face, with his limbs doubled under him as no living man's ever were, and his hair wet with blood, lay old Hugh Hawe upon the chamber floor. Spots of blood were tracked from the bed to the window, and thence to the door. Five fingers of an outstretched, bloody hand, as if suddenly dashed, were marked upon the white-washed wall! Signs of a dread struggle for life were visible everywhere about the room!

Simultaneously with this awful spectacle, the panic-stricken girl caught a momentary glimpse of the figure of a man escaping through the open window!

For one instant she stood transfixed with horror, and then—rushing to the old man, she raised the poor, gray head, that helplessly fell back upon her arm, revealing the ghastly gash across the throat, and the pale, ashen face, quivering in the last death agony!

"Oh, God! my God! who hath done this?" she cried.

The convulsed eyelids flared back, the twitching lips opened, and in spasmodic syllables uttered a name that deprived Agnes of the last remnant of reason—then closed forever in death.

Bursting from the room, she rushed out into the night, waking all the mountain echoes with her terrific screams.

In five minutes the whole plantation was aroused, and in seven they were on the scene of action. The party consisted of Mr. Hayhurst the overseer, and all the negroes—men, women and children.

They hurried into the chamber of the tragedy, and then ensued a scene that baffles all attempts at description!

Old servants knelt over their dead master, mourning, weeping and howling as only negroes can do. Children screamed in terror. Some of the elder negroes wished to raise the murdered man and lay him upon his bed, but Mr. Hayhurst assuming the direction of affairs, forbade them to move him or to meddle with anything in the room, until the arrival of the authorities.

Then the overseer proceeded to send a mounted messenger to rouse and fetch Dr. Henry; another to Piedmont to request the presence of Colonel Shannon; a third to Altamont to summon the coroner, and a fourth to the village inn to bring Mr. Dulanie, if, perchance, he should not as yet have started on his journey.

So far the course of Hayhurst was as judicious as it possibly could be. Each summons sent forth was quickly complied with, and the parties arrived as promptly as time and distance would permit them to do.

First came Colonel Shannon, who reached the scene at about four o'clock; a few moments after him Godfrey Dulanie, pale and horror-stricken at what had occurred; then arrived Dr. Henry, who appeared overwhelmed with sorrow and indignation; and last of all the coroner, with a number of men from the village, whom he had summoned to act as jurymen.

Then a few minutes after sunrise the jury was empanneled and the investigation began. The premises were carefully examined and the witnesses summoned.

First Agnes Darke was called; but she was not in the room, nor in the house, nor in the overseer's cottage, nor in any of the negroes' quarters, nor anywhere about the premises where she was long and vainly sought for.

While the messengers were in quest of her, other witnesses were examined.

Godfrey Dulanie was called, who testified to leaving the deceased, in his usual state, quietly and comfortably in bed at ten o'clock the previous night; the only other person to his knowledge in the house at that time being Agnes Darke. Mr. Dulanie further deposed that having left a valuable document behind in this house, and having missed the paper on his arrival at Altamont, he was hastening back to recover it when he was met by the messenger with the terrible news of the murder.

The next witness was Dr. Henry, who testified to no fact of importance;—he had at four o'clock the day previous left the prisoner in his usual poor health, and in company with his grandson Mr. Dulanie and his ward Miss Darke.

The third witness was the overseer, Mr. Hayhurst, who deposed that soon after two o'clock that morning he had been roused from sleep by a violent knocking at his door, accompanied by the most appalling shrieks; that he had started up and opened the door, when in rushed Agnes Darke in a state bordering on distraction! that he gathered rather from her terrified looks and frantic exclamations, than from any connected story, that her guardian had been assassinated in his chamber! that, immediately, accompanied by the plantation people who had also been aroused by her shrieks and who came hurrying up, he hastened to the house where he found the deceased lying murdered, the window open, and all things in the same state in which afterwards the coroner also found them; that he had lost no time in summoning the proper persons.

Mr. Hayhurst was the last person examined; for the negroes were incapable of giving evidence, and the only other witness, Agnes Darke, could not be found.

So after another hour passed in sifting the testimony and examining the mute evidence of the still life in the chamber, the jury made up their verdict:

"Found murdered by a person or persons unknown."

And as it was then ten o'clock, the coroner and his jury dispersed in quest of breakfast to their homes.

Godfrey Dulanie, as heir-at-law, remained at the house and took the direction of affairs. At his invitation Doctor Henry stayed to assist him. Even Colonel Shannon, forgetting his former antagonism, or remembering that Mr. Dulanie was possibly now the heir of millions, kindly offered his services, which Godfrey, for Honora's sake, frankly accepted.

But before noon that day, the news of the murder was widely spread, and the whole community thrilled as with one heart at the perusal of the tale!

Late in the afternoon, Agnes Darke was found wandering in the woods in a state of high fever and delirium. She had rambled far from home, and was picked up in the neighborhood of the parsonage, to which she was immediately taken, and where Mrs. Willoughby, with a sisterly kindness, took her in and nursed her.

On the fourth day from that of his death, the funeral of Hugh Hawe took place. It was attended by a larger concourse of people than had ever assembled in that district within the memory of man. They were drawn together by the unprecedented interest of the occasion.

After the funeral, upon the asseveration of Dr. Henry and Mr. Sprole the Altamont lawyer, that a will had been made in favor of the former, the alleged instrument was everywhere sought, but in vain. No will of any description was to be found.

And after considerable delay, Godfrey Dulanie entered as heir-at-law into his possessions. Not wishing to alienate his patrimonial estate of Farquier's Folly, he warned the tenant, Dr. Henry, that at the close of his term of lease he should be required to give up the premises. But at the same time Godfrey Dulanie acted with characteristic magnanimity, and gave his cousin a deed of Hawe's Hole with the farm attached.

Besides this gift, Mr. Dulanie would have settled a comfortable independence upon Agnes Darke, who, by the death of her guardian, was left quite destitute.

But the orphan girl, without making the slightest acknowledgment of the kindness of that intention, and even with deep horror, absolutely refused to accept the least assistance from him.

Every one who knew of this event thought her manner of refusing aid from him, to say the least of it, ungracious; but they attributed it to nervous excitement, and excused her upon account of her recent illness, while——

Agnes—shuddered and kept her own counsel!

But the Honorable Godfrey Dulanie was now an eminent character. As a rising statesman, a wealthy capitalist, and a landed aristocrat, he was considered a desirable match even for Miss Honora Paule, and before his return to Washington he was invited to dinner by her proud uncle. Then again, he met his beloved, but with subdued joy, for he felt that while all was brightly changed for them, at what an awful price had been purchased their present happiness.

CHAPTER XII.

A BRIDE.

Bring flowers, fresh flowers, for the bride to wear!
They were born to blush in her shining hair,
She is leaving the home of her childhood's mirth,
She is bidding adieu to her father's hearth,
Her place is now by another's side,
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride.
MRS. HEMANS.

Since the mysterious murder of the miser, twelve months had passed away, and yet not the slightest clue had been discovered to the perpetrators of that heinous crime.

Godfrey Dulanie, in default of the existence of a will, remained in quiet possession of his grandfather's estate.

Doctor Henry, whose lease had not yet expired, continued to reside at Farquier's Folly, to practice his profession, and "win golden opinions from all sorts of people."

But what was most strange, his lovely young wife, from the day of the miser's dreadful death, had fallen into the profoundest state of despondency, that so affected her health as to make the constant attendance of an intelligent nurse absolutely necessary to her safety.

Agnes Darke, having resolved rather than lead a life of idleness and dependence, to earn her bread by any honest occupation, however humble, willingly accepted the situation as attendant upon the invalid lady, and now resided at Farquier's Folly.

Godfrey Dulanie had grown in favor with earth and heaven. His position as the most eminent of the rising young statesmen of the day was universally acknowledged; his rank as one of the most important members of the landed and moneyed aristocracy of the state was fully established; but "sweeter still than this, than that, than all" to him—his relation as the accepted lover, and affianced husband of Honora Paule, was openly recognized.

Christmas approached, at which holy and happy season the marriage was appointed to be solemnized.

Godfrey Dulanie was at this time fulfilling the duties of his official station at Washington; but he was expected to arrive at Piedmont on Christmas Eve, the night being that fixed for the wedding.

It was arranged that the bridal pair should spend one week in nuptial festivities at Piedmont, in the good old-fashioned way, giving and receiving entertainment. And that afterwards they should proceed to Washington City where the official duties of the bridegroom would require his presence, and where apartments were to be pre-engaged at one of the best hotels.

Great were the preparations in progress at Piedmont, for the marriage of the heiress of that house. "Ah"—exclaimed the gentleman, who was my own informant in many of these particulars—"Ah! half the state of Virginia knew what was going on there that week!"

Godfrey Dulanie and Honora Paule would both have willingly waived all this ostentation, but Madam Auderly would have a grand wedding, and as the question of "display or no display," was under the circumstances a matter of comparatively little importance, they did not think proper to oppose the will of the old lady.

Honora, accompanied by her grandmother, her uncle and one of her cousins, went to town to select a proper trousseau. There Madam Auderly was most lavish, as well of her own means, as of those of her granddaughter Honora. She purchased and pressed upon her acceptance the most costly dresses, shawls, laces, jewels, etc., that were to be found in Baltimore. These were duly packed and dispatched to Piedmont. A fashionable milliner and mantuamaker, and a French cook and confectioner were also engaged, to go down thither, to officiate in their several capacities. The mission to the city thus well accomplished, Madam Auderly and her party returned home.

And the remaining week preceding the marriage was one of unprecedented business and bustle. In an upper room a company of dressmakers and plain seamstresses worked under the direction of the city milliner. In the kitchen and pantry a squad of scullions toiled in the service of the French cook and confectioner. Nor was Madam Auderly and her fair grand-daughters any less busily engaged. Their taste and skill governed all the arrangements. Even Colonel Shannon's services were called into requisition to write about two hundred tickets of invitation, which were scattered not only among all the visiting acquaintances of the family throughout the country and the adjoining shires, but also distributed to distant friends and relatives residing in Richmond, Baltimore and Washington. As many of these guests were expected to remain over night, chambers were prepared for their accommodation. And as this was *an occasion of occasions*, you may judge, reader, that the heavy Marseilles counterpanes, with bureau covers to match, and porcelain toilet services, and the finest embroidered muslin bed and window curtains, were all paraded to adorn the guest chambers.

As the important day approached the weather became very fine.

Christmas Eve was a delightful winter day, clear and cold with a crisp frost; the ground was covered with snow, lightly frozen and affording the best sleighing, and therefore promising a large number of guests, even from a distance.

And in fact as early as the middle of the afternoon the sleighs full of company began to arrive.

At this hour the younger ladies were all invisible, being closeted with the milliners in the room adjoining the bride's chamber, engaged in putting the finishing touches to their evening costume.

But Madam Auderly was in the family parlor below stairs to receive her guests. And her woman Ruby was in waiting to attend them to their several chambers.

The elegantly furnished drawing-rooms were not as yet, lighted up and thrown open.

Mr. Dulanie, and his friend Mr. Brent, were expected to arrive at six o'clock. The marriage ceremony was to be solemnized at seven, and to be followed by a ball.

The two younger Misses Auderly were to be the attendants of the bride; and Mr. Brent and Doctor Heine were to be those of the bridegroom. The Bishop of the diocese, who was on a visit to Grace Church Parsonage, for the purpose of confirming the younger members of the church, was to perform the marriage ceremony. Colonel Shannon was to give away the bride.

At six o'clock all was ready. The spacious drawing-rooms, superbly adorned and beautifully illuminated, were filled to overflowing with a distinguished company. The hall was crowded with attendants; and the lawn around the house covered with carriages, sleighs and saddle-horses.

In her chamber, the bride sat and mused. To please Madam Auderly, Honora Paule's dress was the most magnificent costume ever seen in that part of the country. It was in fact an imported bridal dress that the old lady had found in the city. It cost a small fortune, but that circumstance was only an additional recommendation in the eyes of Madam Auderly. It was an ample robe of rich white velvet, with a deep border of orange flowers wrought in seed pearls; a light wreath of the same pattern and material ran around the short sleeves and low neck of the corsage; a bunch of the same flowers similarly formed adorned the stomacher; deep falls of fine point lace half veiled the rounded arms and curved bosom; a bracelet and necklace of diamonds encircled her well-turned wrists and throat; a wreath of orange blossoms, formed of the richest oriental pearls, and gemmed with the dew of finer diamonds, crowned her queenly brow and raven hair. The most delicate gloves and slippers completed her costume. And like a transparent mist tempering the sunshine, over all the resplendant form, there floated a superb veil of valenciennes lace.

Thus magnificently arrayed, Honora Paule sat alone waiting and musing—her noble brow expanded, and radiant, her clear gray eyes dilated and darkened, her pale cheeks softly flushed, her full lips glowing, her whole fine countenace eloquent with the enthusiasm of a profound and earnest joy!

Oh! her thoughts were not engaged with the outward splendor of her own position, dazzling as indeed it was; but with the deep and heart-felt happiness, which, by the side of Godfrey Dulanie, future years *must* bring her—aye, *must!* despite the proverbial vicissitudes of human life! It was not probable, scarcely possible, that adverse change should come to them; but if it should—why let it come! If only her husband, her *husband* were left her, her happiness was beyond the ingenuity of man, the malice of Satan, or the inconstancy of fortune to disturb! In the blessedness of being united for life to *him*—all other favors or disfavors of fortune seemed swallowed up—so that, had it been necessary, rather than have parted with Godfrey Dulanie, she would have joyfully chosen to share with him the deepest obcurity, the severest toil, and the utmost privation, even for the whole of their natural lives;—aye! and had eternity pains and trials for the good, with him she would have shared them also. She seemed not so required to prove her love; and now, in the noonday of her prosperity, all the lesser lights were lost in the radiant sunshine of one intense joy—the joy of becoming for time and for eternity, the wife of Godfrey Dulanie.

So Honora Paule, with soul overflowing with love and gratitude to God, sat and mused, until the sudden opening of the door and the fluttering entrance of her two bridesmaids, who had just put the finishing touches to their own rich toilets, and now appeared in full dress of white satin blond lace, pearl necklaces, and wreaths of half-blown white roses.

"Honora, are you ready? Are you ready, Honora?" they simultaneously inquired.

"Quite," replied the bride, in a low voice and with a soft unconscious smile.

"Well, it wants just five minutes to seven! Mr. Dulanie arrived nearly an hour ago and was immediately shown to his chamber, where I suppose he has by this time changed his traveling dress for his wedding suit," said Miss Jessie.

"And Honora, he has brought down his first groomsman, a Mr. Brent of Washington, one of the finest-looking men I ever beheld. You see I was peeping through the front window blinds, and saw him when he arrived with Mr. Dulanie. And as I am first bridesmaid, and he is to lead me down, I intend to set my cap for him," said Miss Rose.

"Doctor Heine is to be my cavalier—has he arrived, do you know, Miss Sentinel?" asked Jessie.

"Why of course he has! Everybody has arrived! It is a perfect squeeze down stairs! Ruby tells me that Colonel Shannon has as much as he can do to keep a way clear through the halls and a space open around the Bishop for the accommodation of the bridal set. Dear knows how we are to dance!" replied Rose.

"Oh, never fear! I suppose that just now all—young and old—flock to the saloon and the hall to witness the marriage ceremony. But when that is over and the bride-cake is cut, why the old folks will distribute themselves to the dining-room and the card-parlor, and the sentimental young ones will stray off into the music-room, and so the saloon will be left free to the dancers," observed Jessie.

"By the way, Honora, is it not *too* bad that etiquette forbids you and Godfrey to dance together, compelling him to lead me out and you to accept the hand of Mr. Brent for the quadrille, when, in fact, all four of us would probably be so much better pleased with the opposite arrangement," said Rose, laughing.

"As neither Mr. Dulanie nor myself shall dance, dear Rose, I am happy to inform you that you may accept the hand of your proper escort, Mr. Brent, for the quadrille," said Honora.

"What! neither yourself nor Mr. Dulanie dance," exclaimed Rose, in surprise.

"No."

"And why, pray?"

"Because Mr. Dulanie *never* dances."

"Oh, I understand—'The Teath don't *daunce*;' but since when have *you* given over such vanities?"

Honora smiled softly, but did not reply.

And just then a light rap at the door announced a visiter.

Jessie ran and opened it to admit Lily, who came to ask if the bride and her attendants were ready to descend.

"Ready? Yes, and 'almost waiting.'"

"Then, madam," said Lily, with a mock courtesy to her cousin, "the bridegroom and his friends attend your pleasure in the hall below."

And Honora, with "a smile on her lip" and a *prayer* in her heart, left her maiden bower, and followed by her bride-maids, descended the stairs.

Waiting in the hall below, was a group of gentlemen, consisting of Mr. Dulanie, conspicuous above them all by his commanding stature and really kingly countenance; Dr. Heine, whose intellectual and melancholy face was lighted up by unusual admiration; Mr. Brent, who appeared quite as fine-looking a person as Miss Rose had described him to be; and finally Colonel Shannon, who, remembering that the Washingtonian was a stranger, brought him forward immediately and presented him in turn to the ladies.

One glance of involuntary admiration this gentleman cast upon the bride, and then, bowing profoundly, gave his arm to Miss Rose Auderly, and led the bridal procession. Dr. Heine, with a cordial salutation to the whole party, drew the gloved fingers of Miss Jenie over his broad-cloth sleeve, and followed the first couple.

Then Honora and Godfrey met! and for a single instant spoke together.

They had not seen each other for months, and now but a few syllables could be uttered in the few moments afforded while they were passing from the foot of the stairs to the door of the saloon. But these few words were freighted with their hearts' deep love.

"My Honora! my adored bride!" he exclaimed, in a voice subdued but thrilling with impassioned earnestness, as he pressed and drew her hand within his arm, "my worshiped one! my queen! are you not! are you not?"

"I am your *wife*, happier in that dear name than I could be in any title, were titles for me!" she answered, in a tone deeply vibrating with a love too pure, profound and passionate for dissembling.

"My own, own wife—!"

"For life and death, and eternity!"

They had now come up with their attendants, where the whole party paused before the entrance of the saloons.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WEDDING WITHOUT A WIFE.

All things that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers to deck a buried corpse;
And all things change them to the contrary.
SHAKESPEARE.

The doors were immediately thrown open, revealing a gorgeously adorned, brilliantly lighted, and well filled pair of drawing rooms, thrown by folding doors into one spacious saloon.

Amid a general murmur of admiration, the bridal cortege entered, passing in pairs through the narrow passage opened for them through the crowd, and took their station, forming a semi-circle in the cleared space before the bishop, who, book in hand, stood upon the rug.

And now, while every pair of eyes in the two drawing rooms and in the hall beside them were fixed and strained upon the wedding crescent, the bishop opened the book, and, amid a profound silence, by some strange fatality commenced reading—oh, direful omen!—the service for the *burial of the dead!*

But at the same instant that the solemn words fell upon the ears of the bridal pair, thrilling their bosoms with strange, prophetic dread, and before the sound could reach the senses of more distant hearers, he had, with prompt presence of mind, corrected his mistake, and while the giggling bride-maids were hiding their mirth behind their fans or pocket handkerchiefs, he fairly launched into the marriage ritual.

The solemn adjuration was made, the prayers offered, the questions proposed and the vows registered. Colonel Shannon, as by previous arrangement, gave away the bride, and Godfrey Dulanie placed upon her finger the binding ring, the symbol of eternity; then the exhortation was pronounced, the benediction given, and Godfrey and Honora were declared, in the sight of earth and Heaven, man and wife!

Friends crowded around to kiss the bride and shake hands with the bridegroom—so many friends, so many congratulations were there, that it was full fifteen minutes before the newly married pair were permitted to sit down upon the side sofa that had been left vacant for their accommodation.

Then ensued the old-fashioned custom of the cutting up of the bride's cake containing the talismanic *ring* that should confer upon its fortunate finder the happy fate of being the next wedded of the company. The cake was duly sliced by the officiating clergyman, carried around on a silver salver by the first groomsman, and served out to the guests by the first bride-maid. When the huge pyramid was all distributed came the interesting question of—Who had got the ring? It was soon found out.

The talisman had fallen to the lot of the second groomsman, Dr. Heine, who had found it in his slice, imbedded in the bottom crust, which unluckily had been burnt black, and which occasioned much mirth among the giddy young people, who declared that if the doctor were destined to be the first married, he would, nevertheless, have to snatch his wife as a "brand from the burning!"

When this affair was disposed of, the drawing-rooms began gradually to be draughted of the old people, who withdrew to gossip in the family parlor, to play cards in the library, or to seek something still more to their taste in the refreshment room. Among the guests were Mr. Willoughby, the Episcopal clergyman, and Father Maraudy, the Catholic priest. These two personal friends, though theological antagonists, withdrew to the library, and sat down to amuse themselves with a game of chess, while waiting for supper.

Music sounded in the saloon, and the young gentlemen selected their partners, and formed quadrilles. Mr. Dulanie did not dance, and of course Honora would not. They would willingly have been left tete-a-tete upon their sofa, but that bridal etiquette required them, upon this evening, to maintain a sort of regal state, nor remain for one moment unattended; so that, to the vexation of all concerned, Mr. Brent and Miss Auderly, who would much rather have led the dancers, remained on duty near the newly-married lovers, who would have greatly preferred to be left to themselves. Such an unreasoning despot is etiquette.

The dancing went on joyously for an hour or two, quadrilles being followed by gallopades, and gallopades by the stately minuet, and that regal dance by the voluptuous waltz, until at length supper was announced.

Then the bridal party, Honora leaning on the arm of Mr. Brent, and Miss Auderly on that of Mr. Dulanie, and Miss Rose on Dr. Heine's, led the way to the supper room.

The table, luxurious with edibles, elegant in arrangement, and dazzling with light, had taxed the utmost skill, taste and resources of the French confectioner and his assistants, and was, of course, quite a triumph of his art.

An eager crowd, quite ready to appreciate its many excellences, gathered around the board. Some, indeed, seemed spell-bound beside it. Temples and pagodas, Christian and heathen, cornucopias and caskets, boats and bouquets in candy, in jelly and in fruits, were demolished and consumed; ices melted away, though it was the depth of winter; roasted turkies, ducks, geese and game took to themselves wings and flew off. Champagne left long-necked bottles, to become real pain in the heads of short-necked old gentlemen; nuts and jests were cracked; wine and healths were drunk; speeches and fools were made; the feast was prolonged.

At length young people, whose light appetites were soonest satisfied, withdrew from the supper room to the saloon, where the music struck up, and the dancing re-commenced. Then every moment brought fresh reinforcements, until at length the saloon was again quite full, while none but the most inveterate trench-knights "of both sexes" persevered in their devotions to the table.

The bridal group, not being disposed to resume their formal seat upon the sofa, joined the promenaders, and mingled freely and indiscriminately with the company.

It was near the latter end of the evening, while the young people were forming a Virginia reel, and the bride found herself, for a single moment, separated from her party, that Mrs. Willoughby, who had been watching for that very opportunity, lightly touched her shoulder, and whispered—

"It is time, my dear Honora, that you retire, disappear, evaporate! Your bride-maids must not attend you, or leave the saloon, lest your departure should be thus ascertained and commented upon. I will wait upon you to your chamber; there—vanish!" And with that Mrs. Willoughby glided through the crowd, and was lost to view.

Honora, with the conscious blush deepening upon her cheek, moved unnoticed towards the door, and when near enough, swiftly passed the threshold into the back hall, where she was received by Madam Auderly, who took her in her aged arms, pressed her to her bosom, and prayed the Lord to bless and prosper her, and then consigned her to the care of Mrs. Willoughby, who conducted her to the bridal chamber.

Meanwhile, in the saloon the ruse had been successful, and the retirement of the bride was not known, nor, so long as her bride-maids were seen mingling with the company, was her absence even suspected, except by Godfrey Dulanie, who at once missed her, and who had begun to look very uneasy, until Mr. Willoughby glided to his side, and whispered in his ear—

"Patience! In just half an hour to a minute from this, do you steal away and join me in the library, where you will take a parting glass of wine with Colonel Shannon, Father Maraudy, the bishop and myself, after which I will conduct you to the door of Mrs. Dulanie's apartment."

Godfrey flushed quickly, nodded and smiled, and then turning away, mingled with the crowd. The dancing went on merrily, and the prescribed half hour came at length to an end.

Unperceived by the company, who were still at the hight of their enjoyment, Godfrey Dulanie quietly withdrew from the room to the library, where he found Mr. Willoughby awaiting him, and where he was soon joined by Colonel Shannon, Father Maraudy and the bishop. Very gladly would Mr. Dulanie have avoided this parting, wine-drinking and speech-making; but custom was despotic, and he was obliged to yield. The wine was poured, the glasses filled and raised, the toast—

"Health, happiness and long life to Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Dulanie!"

Given and honored.

And then the bridegroom was permitted to bow and retire, attended by Mr. Willoughby.

They had just reached the foot of the stairs when a loud ringing of the hall bell aroused not only them, but all within the house.

A servant nearest at hand opened the front door to see who the vociferous applicant might be.

A gentleman was standing without, who immediately strode into the hall, "as one having authority," and inquired—

"Is Mr. Godfrey Dulanie within?"

"In course he is, sir," answered Zerubbabel.

"Let him know that there is a person here, who wishes to see him."

"Yes, sir; but, but I begs your pardon, sir, he can't be seen—he's jest been gettin' married, sir."

"My errand will admit of no delay. You must let your master know."

"But, sir, I 'sure you, he was jest a going to go—"

"Fellow! it is a matter of life and death. Go fetch your master immediately. Even if he has retired, you must rouse him; I must see him."

"He aint 'tired yet, sir, and if you must, I 'spose you must; but who shall I say axes for him, sir?"

"Tell him—a gentleman."

"Yes, sir," said the boy, hurrying off to inform his master.

But Mr. Dulanie, who had overheard this conversation, now hastened forward and recognizing an old acquaintance in the sheriff of the county, exclaimed cheerfully, and without the least suspicion of his errand—

"Why, Harrison, how do you do?"

"I am well, I thank you, Mr. Dulanie. How are you?"

"*Very* well," returned Godfrey, cordially—"you have business with me, my servant said."

"Yes, sir," replied the sheriff hesitatingly, as if very reluctant to make known his errand.

"By the way, it must be very important business that has brought you here at this strange hour," said Godfrey Dulanie, seriously.

"Sir, it *is*, *very* important," replied the sheriff gravely!

"Then let us know what it is, sir!"

"Mr. Dulanie! it is not only a very important, but a very *painful* business," continued the officer, solemnly.

By this time, Mr. Willoughby, Colonel Shannon, and several others had come up.

"Is the business of such a nature as to demand a private interview?" inquired Godfrey.

"No, sir; but its nature is very, very painful."

"Then, in the name of reason, sir, get it over as quickly as possible," exclaimed Godfrey growing anxious.

"Mr. Dulanie, I am forced to the performance of a most obnoxious duty."

"Well, for Heaven's sake, do it man!"

"Then, Godfrey Dulanie, you are my prisoner!" said the sheriff, letting his hand fall upon the shoulder of the bridegroom.

"Your prisoner!" exclaimed the latter in amazement.

"'Prisoner!'" echoed all who heard the word.

"Yes, sir—yes, gentlemen; I very much regret to be the bearer of a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Godfrey Dulanie."

"Warrant!"

"Arrest!!"

"Godfrey Dulanie!!!" simultaneously exclaimed Mr. Willoughby, Colonel Shannon, and the bishop, who had now joined the party.

"But, good heaven! upon what charge?" inquired Colonel Shannon.

"Upon a charge that will doubtless prove unfounded, sir," replied the sheriff, politely.

"But what the demon is it, then?"

"Godfrey Dulanie is arrested upon the charge of having twelve months since assassinated his aged relative, Hugh Hawe."

"Murder?" questioned Colonel Shannon, in a low, deep, stern voice.

"Parricide!" muttered the bishop, turning pale with horror.

"Godfrey Dulanie!" exclaimed Mr. Willoughby, in indignant incredulity.

As for the accused, after the first involuntary start of astonishment, he stood pale, calm and motionless as a statue.

"It is certainly a monstrous charge, from which doubtless Mr. Dulanie's innocence will come forth as gold from the furnace," said the sheriff, conciliatingly; "but in the meantime, gentlemen, you must see the necessity of my performing my duty."

"Good heaven, this affair will become known to our guests! Willoughby, good friend, pray close the doors of the drawing-rooms, while I send these lounging rascals about their business," said Colonel Shannon, in a low and confidential tone, as he stepped quickly from the scene of action and sent four or five loitering men-servants from the hall through the back door. Mr. Willoughby had complied with the request that had been made him.

But it was too late! Already the rumor that the bridegroom, Godfrey Dulanie, was arrested upon the charge of murder, was spreading in fearful whispers, and eliciting low, horror-fraught exclamations through the company in the saloon. Colonel Shannon and Mr. Willoughby, unconscious of this, returned to the spot where they had left Mr. Dulanie, the bishop and the sheriff.

"What is to be done now?" inquired Mr. Willoughby.

"Gentlemen, I regret to say that Mr. Godfrey Dulanie will have to go with me."

"You cannot mean it?"

"Unfortunately yes, sir; I have a couple of bailiffs with a carriage and horses waiting without to take him away."

"But, for heaven's sake, tell us, then, upon what ground—upon whose accusation—has this warrant been issued."

"Sir, I cannot inform you! All I know is, that about two hours since, I was knocked up out of my bed and summoned to the house of Justice Judson, who put that warrant into my hands, with directions to serve it immediately. I took it, procured a carriage and horses, and the assistance of two officers, and came directly hither. And now, gentlemen, I hope that no obstacle will be thrown in the way of my performance of this duty."

"Sir, I am ready to attend you," said Godfrey Dulanie, now speaking for the first time since his arrest, and with complete self-possession.

The sheriff bowed—"It is what I expected of you, Mr. Dulanie," he said.

"But, Mr. Harrison," said Colonel Shannon, speaking in a low and troubled tone, "the hour is very unseasonable; cannot you remain here with your prisoner until the morning. We will give you a room."

"I grieve to say that I cannot, sir. The charge, you will recollect, is a capital one, which makes the custody of the accused a grave responsibility."

"But where, then, do you intend to take Mr. Dulanie for the night?" inquired the colonel, in a whisper.

"To the County Jail—there is no other place," replied the sheriff, in the same key.

"When will the examination take place?"

"I presume to-morrow, sir, at noon. And now, gentlemen, I trust you will excuse me. Mr. Dulanie, we must take the road."

"I am ready, sir," replied the prisoner, adding, inwardly—"*Oh, Honora! oh, my wife!—who shall tell thee!*"

The sheriff then stepped to the door, and beckoned the driver of the carriage to drive up. Godfrey Dulanie took his cloak from the friendly hands of Mr. Willoughby, who had gone to fetch it, and who now assisted him to put it on, took his hat and gloves in his hands, and stood waiting to enter the carriage.

But just then the doors of the saloon were suddenly thrown open, and the excited crowd of guests, unable any longer to bear suspense, came pouring out into the hall, where they found their worst fears realized—Godfrey Dulanie actually, upon the charge of murder, in custody of the sheriff.

What pen can describe the scene of consternation that ensued?—the amazement of the company, the distraction of the family, the hysterical sobs and cries of the young girls? and, last of all—for she was the very last in the house to hear the news—the fatal grief of Madam Auderly, who, too feeble to bear the sudden, crushing blow, sunk to the floor, and was carried, in a state of insensibility, to her chamber?

In the midst of all this amazement, confusion, and distress, Godfrey Dulanie, in charge of the sheriff, departed—one insupportable thought in his head—one almost irrepressible cry upon his lips—

"*Oh! Honora—Honora!*—oh! my three hours' bride—who shall tell thee this!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A WORD TO STOREKEEPERS.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

Humbugging strangers, countrymen especially, is shocking bad policy in you. Country people are good customers, but they will never go a second time into a store where they have been once imposed upon. Little do some of you yardstick gentlemen suspect what you have turned over to your more honest and sincere next door neighbors, by your smartness in selling "that damaged article" at full price, &c. Well, so may all such knavery be rewarded. A merchant ought to be, at all times, as obliging as he can be, without damage to himself. Too clearly is it manifested to the most careless observer, that no *higher* principle than interest, or, in other words, selfishness, is allowed to direct men in their business, as well as in their political affairs.

It is not right, it is not honorable, it is not even good policy, as, many a time and oft, experience shows. But just so long as their lives are ruled by sinister desires and motives, men will unavoidably stand in their own light, and do themselves harm. This in every situation of life and in every regard. There is a law from which no mortal man shall ever find any way of escape, that he who is forever seeking his own good, regardless of the good of those with whom he deals, shall *never find it.* He may, for a time, have what seems to him good, but in the end it shall be as dust upon his head, ashes between his teeth, and bitterness and sorrow in his soul. The *only* way to *get* good is to *do* good.

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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A PICTURE.

A city is a great picture of human life, drawn with a medley of colors and a variety and minuteness of detail, that defy the pencil and the imagination of the mortal painter. Based on the earth, surrounded by fields, rivers or oceans, and canopied by the heavens, clad in sunshine and cloud or flecked with stars, it is a little world in itself, where all classes and castes of men, all professions and pursuits, all virtues and vices, and all stages of fortune, happiness, and misery are combined and condensed, as much, seemingly, for the astonishment of the clown, as for the contemplation of the philosopher.

How few, even of those who are born, and who live and die in the city, know its lights and shadows, the extremes that meet in it, and the history. romance, tragedy and comedy that unfold from moment to moment, ever-changing, ever-new, as the city pushes out its boundaries, shifts its fashions, and gorges or disgorges its fleeting generations. It is both a bright and a saddening picture of study. Bright, as one watches broad streets shooting to and fro, splendid edifices rising as by magic, gay throngs and equipages floating up and down, commerce folding or spreading its wings at crowded wharves, and all things moving as it were to the tune of sunshine, good-fortune and gladness; saddening, as one looks down past all this glitter into the lanes and by-ways, where want, wretchedness, and squalor form a dark and pitiful back-ground.

The gold and azure colors of prosperity, virtue and peace, are blended with the black and red hues of poverty, disorder and crime, and over against the hand that dispenses charity or gives the warm grasp of friendship and love, is another in which flushes the incendiary's torch and assassin's dagger. At a little distance, or contemplated from an attitude that overlooks it, it seems a gilded bazaar, in which people, merchandize, fashions and habits of all climes are gathered, from whence a confused roar, like that of the sea-surf, rises up day and night. Though studied for a life-time, new tints and new features still appear, and behind the visible surface are mysteries of which the mass can never get more than a shadowy glimpse.

And to stand in the midst of the city, and feel that all that animates this picture must glide out within a half-century, to be renewed like the almost imperceptibly dissolving view—figures and faces remaining, but not the same—is a bitter conclusion of the scene. The cradle rocks against the coffin, the hearse jostles the bridal coach, and down in the silence of the tomb the good, the bad, the gay, youth, manhood, infancy and old age, are at length buried, with all their vices and virtues, their joys and their sorrows. Cities are sometimes represented in miniature models and on panoramas, which men, women, and children rush to see at a price, but they are as little beautiful and wonderful, combined with real cities, as are those fiery rockets which attract eager thousands to watch their sparkles, compared with the eternal stars.

OVERHAUL THEM!

"Overhaul what?"

Why, your old clothes. How *can* you be content to let the moths turn those cast-off garments into useless sieves, while you see so many little children shivering in the street? We take it for granted that you have no children of your own to wear them; or, if you have, you are either too proud or improvident to put second-hand textures on their backs. Why, then, keep your old clothes any longer? Are you waiting for the "Jew woman," with the purpose of exchanging them for trinkets, for which you will be required to pay ten times their real value, while losing your temper and your self-respect in the bargain? We hope you will change your mind, and send them to some poor widow, or worse than widow, who will gladly make them into coats, and pants, and frocks for her little ones. If you know of no such widow, then notify some charitable association of your readiness to entrust their distribution to them.

Yes, overhaul the contents of your clothes-closet! Do it the moment you are done perusing this reminder. Should it meet your eye before you turn to "The Bride of an Evening," or either of the other absorbing stories, comply with its suggestions ere you get engaged in their perusal, and so forget the matter.

Oh, how welcome would be, to the shivering children of poverty, many a cast-off garment, or old shoe, or hat, or bonnet, or other article now a prey to moths and molds, in dark closets or wardrobes, or even garrets, where they have not been seen for years.

Overhaul these places at once, readers of the Ledger, and enjoy the luxury of doing good with them in the mode whereof we have merely *reminded* you, for there *is* a luxury in doing good.

THE WONDER OF THE AGE.

The most wonderful phenomenon of the age, is the age itself. It is not only the new and latest generation, but new and at times almost incomprehensible to its generation. So shifting, so varied, so progressive and startlingly quick with vital thoughts and actions, that its thinkers and actors continually confound one another. There was a time, even within the memory of those who have not grown gray, when a new idea, invention, or enterprise lived its day, enjoyed a reputation, and was not heedlessly jogged to oblivion. That time is essentially gone by. The day of plodding, and resting upon what one had accomplished—though it were never so great a thing—is over. There is no repose upon laurels now; the world has abused all fixed notions and rules; has changed its pace from a walk to a gallop, and he who would be leader, whether in arts, inventions, or arms, must ride faster than his fellows, or be trampled down, lost sight of and forgotten.

Lightning and steam have not only superseded horse-power and wind, but with as astonishing a revolution have whipped up and quickened the human brain, until the ideas of the age are equally more rapid than those of half a generation ago, as are the means of transmitting them from brain to brain the world over. In the day of wooden ploughs (not long syne) the great danger was thought to be in going too fast and knowing too much—now the difficulty is to go fast enough and know enough. The fear, so groundless with our good old fathers, that new ideas, new inventions and enterprises were dangerous to the welfare, virtue and peace of society, is completely extinguished. Men have found the essential secret of prosperity and greatness—that all progress is the work of experiment; and the result of a few experiments, in spite of the old stand-still philosophy, has spurred them to experimenting more and everywhere, in all fields and professions. They have thus curbed and saddled steam, tamed lightning, cast by wooden ploughs, and in a thousand ways advanced and exalted themselves, physically and mentally, as individuals and nations.

The religions, the politics, the society and commerce of the world, are all transformed by this splendid conceit, this lightning-like go-a-head-a-tiveness of the age. Amelioration is written by it all over the surface of the globe. It rides upon revolutions that overthrow all old abominations—thrones, castes, creeds and prejudices—scattering the light of higher prosperity upon all temporal conditions, and higher intelligence into all souls. On, on! it sweeps, stimulating itself by astonishing conceptions and deeds, to dare every hight and depth that can reveal a new element for the good or glory of mankind. It outstrips the church in beneficence, philosophy in reflection, and in enterprise almost surpasses itself. The press, the lecture-room, the common school, the telegraph, the steamer and the locomotive, all guided and garrisoned by busy brains and ready hands, are the springs and sinews, the vital power of the age. On, on! it sweeps, making its path upon old endeavors, forever seeking for things nobler and better in the untried and new.

THE SONGS OF A PEOPLE.

"Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws," was the saying of an eminent British statesman; and, so far as the element of power was considered, the remark was a profound one. The poetical impulses of a man are the ones most powerfully, successfully and universally acted upon; in proof of which it is only necessary to observe the potent spell which the orator, in the forum or the pulpit, has exercised over the masses of mankind. No species of eloquence is so widely persuasive as song, which, welling up from the poet's soul, is passed from mouth to mouth and from heart to heart, until millions respond to it. The ancients well represented the bard as entrancing the beasts with his heaven-born melodies. In all ages the sons of song have been the rulers of kings even; and the laws of rude tribes, as well as powerful civilized ancient nations, have been embodied in song, and transmitted orally from generation to generation. The Skalds and Sagas of the North, and the Druids, compelled savage races to prayer, or invoked them to battle by their wild songs.

The eloquence of Demosthenes made Athens thrice invincible to the elder Macedonian; and Cicero, with this weapon, stripped Veres of his imperial robe of rapacity and power. But the eloquence of the orator extends little beyond the arena of the forum; while the song of the bard, a more congenial eloquence to the common feelings and understanding, knows no bound. The "blind old bard of Scio's Isle" sings and delights to the latest generation. Hence, song has been made a prominent adjunct of worship; and devotion at the altar and enthusiasm on the battle-field, have been kindled by its inspiration. Crusaders, priests, lovers and politicians have alike employed it, and its presence, like an exhilarating and refining spirit, has ever been fraught with mighty results.

A COMMON CASE OF SWINDLING.

A few weeks since the attention of a young man, who had come to this city to seek his fortune, was attracted by the following advertisement in a daily paper:

> WANTED—A FEW ACTIVE YOUNG MEN, OF GOOD education and address, to engage in a light, genteel, and agreeable business, which yields large profits, and out of which a fortune can soon be made. A young man of unblemished character, who has a small capital, would, if he preferred it, be taken into the establishment as a partner. Call at, etc.

Our young friend "called" at once. Found an agreeable gentleman, who soon won his confidence, and professed to take a fancy to him, and to feel much interest in his welfare. After a little skilful negotiation and hesitation, the agreeable gentleman agreed to sell the young man of "unblemished reputation" an interest in the business. A bargain was accordingly made. The young man paid over eight hundred dollars, (his entire means,) for "one-fourth of the business"—which, by the way, he knew nothing about, having been completely duped by his plausible deceiver, whom he feared to offend by too close questioning. In just eleven days after he became a partner, however, he found out that the principal business of the firm consisted in catching just such unsophisticated youths as himself, and selling them an "interest in the establishment." His $800 he of course never has seen and never will see again, nor the $20 that he loaned his partner "for a few hours" the day after he entered the firm.

Young men of "unblemished reputation" and small capital should pay no attention to the advertisements addressed to their class, for they are all published for swindling purposes.

* * *

Riches do not consist in having more gold and silver, but in having more in proportion than our neighbors; whereby we are enabled to procure to ourselves a greater plenty of the conveniences of life than comes within their reach, who, sharing the gold and silver of the world in a less proportion, want the means of plenty and power, and so are poorer.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

AARON BURR.

Aaron Burr, the terror of husbands who had pretty wives, and of fathers who had pretty daughters; the murderer of Hamilton; the traitor! Why should Mr. Parton exhume a reputation so inodorous to American nostrils? Have we not, as republican children, stood with round-eyed wonder, to listen to anathemas against the bewitching, tricky monster, who could so fascinate even his jailers, that his adversaries were never sure of their prey, though they had him, to all human appearance, under substantial lock and key? This man, all devil, as they would have us believe, all the more to be feared that his cloven foot was concealed under such graceful drapery; who chose his friends as a carpenter would his tools, and threw them aside as coolly when worn out in his service. This man, who played with women's hearts as a kitten does with a ball—careless if its destination be a blackened heap in the fire. This man, who compassed heaven and earth to carry his point; who dared do everything that no other man would dare dream of; who knew neither fatigue, nor hunger, nor thirst, till the goal was reached; no matter though his chariot-wheels ploughed through miles of human hearts. What can Mr. Parton have to say for such a wretch, in the hearing of men who, often more execrable than him whom they execrate, still shout over his senseless dust—"*Accursed!*"

What every faithful biographer should say—*the truth.*

No man is all devil, nor woman either. In every heart, ossified as it may appear, there is yet a spot, which the divining rod of humanity alone can discover, where lies the hidden fountain undiscernible to the up-turned eye of the self-righteous Pharisee.

We lay down Mr. Parton's impartial and fascinating history of this man's life with a sorrowful sigh. Had his *mother* but lived to mold the priceless elements of such a character! To soften the ascetic features of Puritanism to his youthful eye, that he had not turned disgusted from the faith of his fathers, nor with the rash hand of impatience thrown away the wheat with the chaff. Had *she* but lived, when injudicious teachers were drawing the bow so tightly, that a fatal rebound was inevitable; had *she* been there to lay her gentle hand upon the loose rein of license; had *her* soft voice but whispered in an ear that was always listening for love—"My son! my son!"

We should not, then, have read of that tragical duel, which no enlightened mind can regard but with horror; and yet whose accidental termination, had it been reversed, might have turned the world's fickle breath of obloquy upon an opponent now so canonized. That the victor in this unholy strife had, under that stoical exterior in his secret heart, a gnawing worm, for whose writhings society and its excitements were the necessary and constant alleviations, I, for one, cannot doubt. The ex-Vice-President skulking in foreign exile, who could repeatedly forego even his meagre allowance of food, that he might purchase a pleasure for his idolized little grandson, was not the man lightly to think of, or wholly to forget, the seven weeping children he had orphaned, nor the widow in whose lonely life-path he had planted such piercing thorns. That he believed that the odium cast upon him was from a political stand-point, and received it as such, was undoubtedly true; but that the stiffened corse of Hamilton was a skeleton at his feasts, I most religiously believe.

And—were it not so;—were he all, and worse, that his most virulent enemy could picture him; had he been the insatiate fiend they would make him out; what heart, be it never so relentless, could look unmoved upon the fortitude and assumed cheerfulness with which he bore the cutting slights of his former friends and allies; accepting patiently his own altered lot, which denied him every gratification for which cultivation and refinement cry give—give,—and unsoured by his own crushing misfortunes, shouldering ever the burdens poverty had laid too heavily on others;—is there nothing sublime in this? Nothing to admire in a fortitude that bore so bravely troubles which would have driven any ordinary man to suicide?

For myself, I could scarce refrain from tears at the spectacle. And when the last plank floated from under him; when the daughter, who was to him as the beacon-light to the shipwrecked mariner, went out in utter darkness, and after the storm the old man stood like a stately tree reft by the lightning, every green leaf shriveled and blackened, yet still striving, under the arching heavens, to put forth fresh blossoms of hope; can you not now throw the mantle of charity over the errors born of a mis-directed youth, and so nobly atoned for? Can you not desire to grasp in your own the kind hands which made smooth for those weary feet the steep descent to the grave? And would you not *yourself* have hastened to stand around his death-bed, that the brave old man might have numbered one more friend at the last?

I have alluded to Burr's unfortunate rejection of the faith of his fathers. I know of nothing more affecting than the letter written by his daughter (Mrs. Alston, who was, like her father, the idol of society, and bore her share of the odium of his downfall with equal fortitude) to him on the death of her only child, whom they both so idolized. She says, "Whichever way I turn is anguish—*I think even Omnipotence could give me no equivalent for my boy—no—none—none.*" Alas, that that father should have taught this gifted daughter so much—and yet so little! Alas, that they *both* should have thrown away, as useless, the chart and compass by which the most ignorant of tempest-tost mariners can steer safely into port.

Fanny Fern.

* * *

"Lucy Howard's Journal" is the title of a neat volume by Mrs. Sigourney, just issued from the press of Harper & Brothers. The work is in the form of a journal, commenced by a bright girl ten years of age, and continued through her school-days, courtship and marriage, to the time of her death, and is full of vivacity, pathos, quiet wisdom, and unobtrusive goodness and instruction. "Lucy Howard's Journal" will add another and an unfading leaf to the literary chaplet with which the gifted authoress was long since by acclamation crowned, and which she has always worn with such gentle dignity and winning grace.

* * *

A Great Man.—A great man commonly disappoints those who visit him. They are on the look-out for his thundering and lightning, and he speaks about common things much like other people; nay, sometimes he may even be seen laughing. He proportions his exertions to his excitements; having been accustomed to converse with deep and lofty thoughts, it is not to be expected that he will flare or sparkle in ordinary chit-chat. One sees no pebbles glittering at the bottom of the Atlantic.

A MILLIONAIRE IN WANT.

Our foreign exchanges, speaking of the recent death of the eminent London—and we believe Jewish—merchant, Morrison, who left a clear estate of £4,000,000, or about twenty millions of dollars, state that, for five or six years prior to his decease he was so impressed with the idea of his poverty, and that he must work out his livelihood, that his relatives and friends to pacify him were obliged to set him daily at some manual labor, paying him therefor a few shillings weekly—as much, perhaps, as made him comfortable and contented during the period of his porter-ship in early life. In addition to this, he was a regular applicant for parish alms. These facts might seem impossible, were not their character corroborated by abundant other similar cases—though we can recall no one so remarkable as this.

Without being very figurative—save in a multiplying way—Morrison's wealth may be stated as countless; the bare interest from it was a fortune annually, and the probate tax upon his will is set down at £100,000. Only think, in the face of much brave, philosophical holding on to life in the midst of saddest destitution and misfortune, of this "merchant prince," so called, cowering day and night like a wretched mendicant before visions of poor-houses, and refusing to live or be comforted unless set to work like the veriest menial. Was not this a most pitiful and warning sight—a most terrible satire on the potency, or rather the impotency of riches to assure man of the highest blessings—peace of mind and content. Perchance his pauperism of mind was a blow purposely inflicted, in his pride of wealth, to teach him and teach us all, that although we may pile golden defences round about us, still we cannot escape the divine injunction, "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread."

It was not so strange a spectacle, Seneca, with his seven millions of pounds fortune, writing on a golden table about the pleasures of poverty—he wrote from his imagination, and imagined poverty may have pleasures—nay, that was not so strange nor so satirical, as this five years pauperism of a millionaire. Verily, this man must have set gold up for his God, and so worshiped and become absorbed in the yellow deity, that the great God became obscure and invisible, and his kindly providence, which alike notes

"A hen perish or a sparrow fall,"

and to which all good men, and all intelligent healthy minds look in times of trouble, with faith and hope, must have utterly withdrawn itself. Yet, this Morrison is said to have retained to the end, for all business purposes, his accustomed sagacity and acuteness. He could swell the image of his idol—could feed it gold to the gorge, and make hunger the bulk that brought him wretchedness, but he could not escape the pangs of personal fear of want. Miserable man, who would have exchanged being with him, even for the "boot" of his estate? He was that man described by the poet:—

"In folly further gone,
With eye awry, incurable and wild,
The laughing-stock of devils and of men,
And by his guardian angel quite given up.

* * * * * * * *

Of all who sold eternity for time,
None bargained on so easy terms with death.
Illustrious fool! nay, most unhuman wretch!
He sat among his bags, and, with a look
Which hell might be ashamed of, drove away the poor
unalmsed,
And 'midst abundance died!—sorest of evils,
Died of utter want!"

THE WRONG END.

The great mass of society-tinkers begin at the wrong end—at the surface instead of the base; and hence their almost universal failure. They fancy—and we all are inclined to fancy—that if government were only better society would be better. We seem to think that politicians and governors might do much for us if they would. What an absurdity of conclusion! Politics and government are only a reflex of our own ideas and will, *i.e.*, of the ideas and will of the ruling majority; and how, therefore, can we or society be helped by politics and government, save as we help ourselves? If we were to make our politics honest and straightforward, and our government just (as, with sound politics, it most likely would be), we should, no doubt, be greatly benefited; for it cannot be disguised that we suffer much tax, disorder and ill-name through the various misrule to which we are subject. But we assert that, at best or worst, politics and government, in a free country, need not affect us materially. We make a radical mistake when we look to the surface—or political and government side—of society for help. We are thus playing the part of the foolish teamster, who stood shouting to Hercules for help, when he might have put his shoulder to his rutted wheel, and relieved himself.

We love to cast our indifferent or bad fortune upon other shoulders than our own, and are always ready to question Providence, and attribute to society and government evils begotten by ourselves. What we want to mend society and perfect government—and thus secure our own greatest good—is the regeneration of ourselves. If we are idle, let us become industrious; if extravagant, let us be frugal; if dissipated, let us cultivate temperance, and so on through the whole catalogue; and we shall soon witness a most agreeable metamorphosis. Not only will our own affairs be righted, but society will right itself, for society is only a sum of individualities. "The proper study of mankind is man," says the philosophical poet, and man has only to set himself right in order to right mankind. Without this righting of things at the base, the structure of society will always be irregular and uncouth, and the surface disorderly and repulsive. Let every individual be but the good fraction, and society and government will be all he can desire. There is no other road to perfection.

"AN HONEST MAN."

The ancient cynical philosopher, Diogenes, was seen, on a certain occasion, with a lamp in his hand, peering about amongst the crowd, in great anxiety, seemingly. On some one asking him what he was looking for, he quietly answered, in his usual tone of misanthropic satire, "*I am searching for an honest man!*"

Making due allowance for the fact that Diogenes was the son of a "money-changer" who was not in good repute, and that he himself had, by his own confession, been guilty of counterfeiting, or "adulterating the public coin," in the language of one of his biographers, still this anecdote goes to show that honest men were not as plentiful as they might have been in the Athenian republic. Judging by the number of the complaints of dishonesty, in public as well as private, which meet our ears, in tones no longer whispering, there is reason to fear that the aid of a lantern would almost be necessary to a successful search for an honest man among some of the groupings which take place in our American republic!

* * *

Men want a restraining as well as propelling power. The good ship is provided with anchors as well as sails.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

When Cowper was made bishop of Galloway, an old woman, who had been one of his parishioners and a favorite, could not be persuaded that he had deserted the Presbyterian cause. Resolved to satisfy herself, she visited him where he had his residence as Dean of the Chapel Royal. On being ushered into the magnificent room where he sat, she exclaimed—"O, sir, what's this?—and ye ha' really left the guid cause and turned prelate?" "Janet," said the bishop, "I have got a new light on this subject." "So I see, for when ye was at Perth ye had but ane candle, and now ye ha' got twa before ye. *That's* your *new* light."

Being our own master means often that we are at liberty to be the slaves of our own follies, caprices, and passions. Generally speaking, a man cannot have a worse or more tyrannical master than himself. As our habits and luxuries domineer over us the moment we are in a situation to indulge them, few people are really so dependent as the independent. Poverty and subjection debar us from many vices, by the impossibility of giving way to them. When we are rich, and free from the dominations of others, we are corrupted and oppressed by ourselves.

It is the activity of the mind, not the functional vitality of the body, that constitutes life. By the enlargement of our ideas and the general diffusion of knowledge, consequent upon our increased powers of locomotion and comparison, we may condense a whole existence into a narrower compass of time, and enjoy a dozen such lives as were passed by the most enlightened of our ancestors. And yet, doubly precious as this state of being has become, how many are compelled to throw away *life* for a *livelihood!*

A writer that we especially admire, says, let one watch the whirling cloud of doves, as they descend, like great snow-flakes, one by one, till the dusty street is drifted white; the elegance there is in every motion; the grace of attitude, as they glide in and out among the feet of horses and rolling wheels, and he will think it no wonder the Holy Spirit came earthward as a dove.

Mr. J. C. Knower, of Iowa, a candidate for an humble office, confesses that he has traveled "around at least one-third of the entire political circle." We suppose that the portion of the circle he has traveled around may properly be styled *Knower's Arc.*

A Southern political editor says that he does not "profess to have much knowledge of our foreign relations." He may in time have a good opportunity of knowing them better. They appear to be all coming over to settle among us.

Women are unquestionably partial to regimentals. Sir Walter Scott, who has never been charged with a want of gallantry, says, in allusion to the red uniform of the British officers, that "ladies and turkeys are always attracted by a red rag."

Luxury is the conqueror of conquerors, the consumption of states, the dry-rot of the constitution, the avenger of the defeated and oppressed. Poverty, conquest, luxury, decay—such is the Round-robin history of the world.

A rather notorious editor in the northwest tells what he will do, and adds very emphatically that he is always as good as his word. Unquestionably he is, but the great misfortune with him is, that his word is good for nothing.

"The world seems to the old to have gone backward, because they have gone forward. This is a mistake; nothing in nature can retrograde—all must go forward." Thus speaks a very pretty writer, but he seems to forget there are such things as crabs and crawfishes.

Mandeville's doctrine that private vices are public benefits, and that individual luxury, even when pushed to a faulty excess, is a public advantage, cannot be maintained. Nothing that is injurious to one can be good for many.

It may seem strange, but it is true, that a man in New York, perfectly uneducated in art, took half a dozen exquisite portraits in less than half an hour. We must add that he himself was soon afterwards taken for the theft.

A western editor, speaking dolefully of the hard times, expresses a fear that the whole world will suspend. We must distress him with the painful information that the whole earth is already suspended—in space.

Our admired friend, the unimitating and inimitable Fanny Fern, asks, "Why men do not talk sense while they are about it?" The fact is, they seldom *are* "about it"—even when they are in the presence of the ladies.

We find in an English paper an account of two murderers who escaped from the custody of the sheriff, and hid themselves in the big gun at Dover. They should, when found, have been discharged at once.

Life is a momentary convulsion between two tranquil eternities; an avenue to the grave; as the grave is the flowery gate that opens to a new and more enduring life.

Some genius suggests the brilliant idea of pressing all the lawyers into the country's service in the event of war, because nobody under heaven can stand their charges.

A dull writer, who undertakes to describe the White Mountains, calls himself "a first-rate mountaineer." He is unquestionably the proprietor of *two mounting ears.*

At a recent fire in Pittsburg, the fire companies turned their engines upon each other. The people of the city were very much "put out," but the fire wasn't.

An admirer of dogs, having a new litter of a fine breed, was requested by a friend to put him down for a puppy. "Sir, I set you down for one a good while ago."

A certain dissatisfied wife says that her husband is such a blunderer, that he can't even try a new boot or shoe without "putting his foot in it."

It has been said that a lady putting on her corsets, is like a man who drinks to drown his grief, because *so-lacing* herself, she is getting tight.

John Neal talks about "the brave old earth." She is not so brave but that she often quakes awfully.

There is a great deal of high living among very low-lived people.

CURRENT ITEMS.

Louis Napoleon is said to be in great dread of a sudden revolutionary outbreak in Paris, and is harassed almost beyond endurance by his complications and his fears. Eugenie also expresses much distress of mind, for fear that her idolized boy may meet with a similar or worse fate than that of the son of the great Napoleon. Uneasy lies the head that wears a French crown.

The Sepoys in the Cawnpore district, who had never seen any of the Highlanders until the recent outbreak, puzzled at their appearance and appalled at their prowess, have at last come to the conclusion that they are devils, and go barelegged so as to be able the more handily to break the backs of Sepoys across their knees.

Not long since Mr. W. T. Pearce, of Franklin, Louisiana, was killed by three men, who were arrested and committed to jail. They soon broke out of prison, were pursued, and, after an eight days' chase, one was shot, another was taken, who died from fatigue and exhaustion, and the third was captured, and hung on the spot.

In New London, Connecticut, within a few days, a Mr. Brayton killed himself by taking a dose of poison while intoxicated; an old lady named Mrs. Naomi Beckwith fell down stairs, and was killed by the fall; and a little girl named Bishop fell from a barn window, and escaped without serious injury.

At Greencastle, Indiana, a man named Mullenix was recently hung for murdering his wife, who, from the time of his arrest, has exhibited the greatest indifference, and even at the gallows conducted himself with the levity of a buffoon. Could such a man have been in a sound state of mind?

A "respectable" man named Smith, living in Lexington, Mississippi, was lately sent to the penitentiary for thirty years, for whipping a negro servant-woman so severely as to cause her death.

The launching of the leviathan steamer, the Great Eastern, it is estimated, will cost half a million of dollars—by far the most expensive "launch" ever before known,

Miranda Swanston, a beautiful girl of nineteen, living in Harlem, was choked to death, a few days ago, by swallowing a piece of meat "the wrong way," as it is called.

A couple of Cincinnati "ladies" recently had a "difficulty," when one of them, named Josephine White, drew a revolver, and fired it at her adversary.

Daniel Felt, of Meadville, Pennsylvania, a few days since swallowed a quart of whiskey, and in one hour afterwards was a corpse.

Patrick Tully, an old citizen of Oakland County, Michigan, was recently murdered by his own son.

THE OLD YEAR.

Written on the First of January.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

List! list! what tone was that which seemed to rise
Upon the wind of midnight? Nature sounds
No knell o'er earth for the departed year,
Yet when its last breath passed into the void
Of the by-gone eternity, I heard,
Echoed within the chambers of my soul,
A sound, perchance the shadow of a sound,
Wild, strange and dismal, as it were a wail—
A low and blended wail from all the graves
And sepulchres of ocean and of earth—
Upon the chilly air. Oh, was it not
The solemn voice of old eternity,
Uttering one cry, one wild and deep lament,
For his dead child!

The year, alas! is gone
Forever from the world! He seemed too strong,
Too mighty e'er to die. He laid his hand
On breathing millions, and they sank beneath
The green grass of the grave; he blew aloud
The trumpet-blast of battle, and dark hosts
Met in the mortal shock, and when the flame
And smoke of conflict had gone by, they lay
Like autumn's red leaves on the plain; he passed
O'er earth, and, at each wave of his broad wings,
Volcano, earthquake, whirlwind, storm and flood,
Sprang up beneath the silent spell, and wrought
The fearful errands of their destiny;
Yet now, his own great mission all fulfilled,
He lies on broken pinions with the dead,
There, there to sleep forever.

The old year,
Called forth from earth a blooming paradise
Of sweet spring flowers—he waved his Autumn wand,
And they were not. He woke in human souls
Myriads of hopes and joys and burning loves,
That seemed like things of immortality—
He touched them, and they died. Another year
A boon from God, is cast beneath the skies,
And what is darkly hidden in the still
And silent depths of its mysterious months,
We may not know—thank God we may not know
We only know that with each passing month,
And day and hour, the low, deep wail of grief,
The maddened cry of agony, the shout
Of fierce ambition, the loud thunder shock
Of bloody conflict, and the knell of death
Will echo, each its one brief moment, o'er
The sea of time, and then be swallowed up,
And lost forever in the onward sweep
Of its remorseless and unpitying waves.

RICHARD HOFFMAN:

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER I.

London excites wonder and admiration when viewed in its *ensemble*, but appals when studied in detail. It is impossible for the mere observer to thread its streets without being struck by the hum of busy life—the well-dressed crowds, pouring like a continual stream in every direction—the glaring shops—the well-appointed equipages, and heavily laden vans, transporting the world's merchandise from one point of the metropolis to the other—unmistakable signs of industry, prosperity and wealth.

This is the picture as Claude might have painted it—sunny, bright and cheering; but Rembrandt would have treated the subject in a widely different manner—his view would have been taken *at night*, when poverty, fierce hunger and reckless crime emerge from their retreat, imitating the tiger's instincts in seeking their prey in darkness.

Thousands of our readers, we presume, have heard of a thoroughfare running parallel with the Thames, in London, and known as the Belvedere-road.

At the period at which our tale commences, the houses in the above locality were of the meanest and shabbiest description, and inhabited chiefly by sawyers or draymen, employed in the wood-yards and breweries, and also, we regret to add, by a far less respectable description of characters—fugitives from justice.

Before passing under the arch of Waterloo Bridge, which intersects it about midway, the Belvedere-road takes a capricious bend, leaving a large semi-circular piece of ground, occupied as a timber-yard, at the back of which stands a row of low-built cottages, forming a sort of irregular crescent.

One of these cottages had been inhabited for several years by an exceedingly poor family, named Hoffman; and yet the Hoffmans had no right to be poor, for the father was an intelligent, well-educated man, thoroughly conversant with accounts, and possessed of no mean talents for business. Unfortunately there was one drawback—disappointment had made him a drunkard; in his moody humor he frequently cursed destiny instead of his besetting vice for his misfortunes, and wondered why everything failed with him. A child might have given him the key of the enigma.

At the age of twenty-one, George Hoffman had married Rachel Bentley, the only child of a wealthy city merchant, in whose counting-house he had been reared. Although the marriage took place during the absence of the father in India, where the affairs of the firm had called him, it was not altogether a clandestine one, for the mother of the bride gave her consent, and sanctioned it by her presence.

It would be difficult to decide whether indignation or surprise predominated most in the heart of Mr. Bentley, when, on his arrival in England, he found his daughter the wife of one of his clerks. Apart from the inequality of the match, it destroyed the cherished hope of years, the prospect of uniting her to his nephew, Carus Kearn, a junior partner in the house.

Although the merchant really loved his child, he had never been very demonstrative in his feelings; pride and affection were both wounded, and anger is an unwise counsellor.

"You have chosen for yourself," he said, in answer to Rachel's passionate entreaties for forgiveness. "You had your mother's sanction; mine, it seems, was of little consequence. The wife of my clerk, George Hoffman," he added, coldly, "cannot remain under my roof. Her home is beneath her husband's. I leave London for three days, on a visit to my old friend Thornton. On my return, I shall not expect to find you here."

"Oh, that letter!—that fatal letter!" sobbed the poor girl, in an agony of grief.

"It would not alter my determination," observed her father, coldly.

With these harsh words he quitted the room, and proceeded at once to the counting-house, where his first act was to send for his son-in-law into his private office, and dismiss him from his employment; his next, to pay him the sum of a thousand pounds, the amount of a legacy which a distant relative had left to Rachel.

"I had hoped," observed the young man, deeply stung by the proceeding, "that you would have acted more generously, sir, and permitted me at least to retain my situation. I have served you faithfully."

A sneer, expressive of doubt, curled the lips of Mr Bentley.

"Have you anything to urge against my character, sir?" demanded the speaker, proudly.

"An accountant has gone through the books," replied the merchant, deliberately, and everything *appears* to be correct."

"Everything *is* correct," exclaimed his son-in-law, impetuously.

"I trust so," was the calm rejoinder; "and the house will give you the usual references in the event of your obtaining another situation; though probably," added the speaker, in a sarcastic tone, "you will enter into business on your own account."

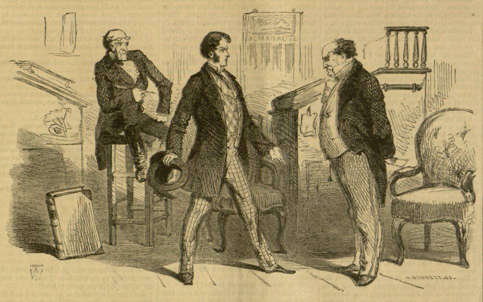
"Probably," repeated George Hoffman, carelessly, for he felt that he was harshly used. "Good morning, sir."

One person besides the two whom we have just introduced to our readers, had been present at the interview—Peter Mangles, the oldest clerk in the establishment. He and Richard Bentley had been boys together, and, independent of the relation of servant and employer, the strictest friendship united them. Whatever Peter did was sure to be well done. He had all the accounts of the house at his fingers' ends, and, on more than one occasion, had rendered eminent services by his experience, knowledge of the money market, and great aptitude for business.

In person Peter Mangles was exceedingly thin, and had a slight stoop, doubtless from his many years' labor at the desk; his features were sharp, intelligent, and marked by great benevolence; there was an almost child-like simplicity in his manners, and a slight dash of eccentricity about him out of business. Probably, because he was a bachelor, many considered him without one tie or interest in the world. They were in error; the counting-house was his world; he knew no other.

As the speaker was quitting the private office, the old clerk looked up from his desk and pronounced his name.

George Hoffman turned.



THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE FATHER-IN-LAW AND SON-IN-LAW.

"I am sorry you are about to leave us," said Peter, extending his hand to him—a thing he had never done before during the number of years they had known each other, "for you have great talent for business, only a little too speculative; but that is the fault of youth. Good bye," he added; "if ever you require a friend, you know where to find one."

"Thank you! thank you, Mr. Mangles," replied the young man, in a tone which showed he was not insensible to kindness, especially at such a moment. "You, I am sure, never advised that an accountant should be sent for to examine my books."

"No! *Certainly not.*"

"You believe me honest?"

"As honest as my ledger," replied the old clerk, emphatically, at the same time striking the book before him with the open palm of his hand; "and if any one doubts it, tell them that Peter Mangles said so."

This was a proud testimony to his integrity. George Hoffman felt it as such, and his heart beat lighter as he quitted the private office of his father-in-law and late employer.

Mr. Bentley felt doubly dissatisfied; in the first place with himself, for conscience whispered that he had acted harshly to his child; and in the second with his confidential clerk, whose conduct annoyed him.

"I think you might have chosen some more fitting place," he said, with considerable asperity, "to display this sudden ebullition of friendship for one who has so deeply wronged me."

"But not a more *fitting time*," observed the old man, mildly.

"And you still believe George Hoffman to be honest?" added the merchant.

Peter Mangles nodded his head affirmatively.

"Despite the missing securities for ten thousand pounds, which unfortunately are negotiable in India," continued the speaker, impatiently.

Peter scratched his right ear, a habit he had contracted when anything went wrong in the firm, or the state of the money-market puzzled him.

"Can't make it out! can't make it out! but I shall do so one day. Never rested for a week after the loss. One thing, however, is certain, your son-in-law knows nothing about them; he never had the keys of the iron safe in his possession an instant."

"Were the securities ever there?" demanded his employer, doubtfully.

The clerk appeared painfully surprised.

"Placed them there myself," he exclaimed; "took the keys home with me, and slept with them, as I have done for the last five-and-twenty years, under my pillow; in the morning they were gone; there are only two sets of keys," he added, "*yours and mine.* Did you take yours with you to India?"

"No."

"That was wrong."

"I left them," said Mr. Bentley, "in the secret drawer of my cabinet, where I found them on my return. George Hoffman must have been frequently at the house, and——"

"Rubbish!" interrupted the former. "I tell you he is honest. I have watched him from a boy; always found his petty cash-book right to a farthing. You may just as well suspect me," he continued; "in fact, I am not quite certain you do not; one injustice generally leads to another."

"It is you who are guilty of injustice now," said the merchant, with a smile; "but I forgive you, for you mean well. We must not quarrel."

"I am not quite so sure of that," observed Peter Mangles, in a tone in which wounded feeling and anger seemed to contend; "in fact, Richard Bentley, I begin to feel it necessary that we should quarrel; I shall be better after it. I am certain something dreadful will happen to the firm," he continued, "if we do not; for whilst you were talking to poor George in that unchristian, *unbusiness-like* manner, I made a wrong entry in the ledger, and two blots! two blots, sir!—two on the same page!! Look through the book for the last thirty years, and you will not find such a disgraceful thing; and all through you, Richard," he added, reproachfully—"all through you!"

In his excitement the speaker had quitted his stool at the desk, and as he stood in the centre of the room a singular resemblance might be traced in his appearance to that of a respectable jackdaw—*cathedral one, of course.* His thin legs, cased in tight black pantaloons and well polished hessian boots, the head and shoulders bending forward, and the palms of the hands crossed behind the back of his narrow-tailed body-coat.

"You forget my feelings," answered his employer. "Rachel has broken my heart."

"Pride is breaking it,' muttered the old clerk.

"Married a beggar."

"Beggar!" repeated Peter. "I see we must quarrel; there is no help for it. Beggar! what were you when a foolish but true friend lent you all he had to commence business with? George Hoffman has all that you then possessed—industry, talent, and integrity. Discard him, disown him, crush him, if you will; but, mark my words, he will make a bright man of business yet! It was not without good reasons, I feel assured, although I have not the slightest idea what they were, that your late wife consented to the marriage; she was a good woman, Richard, and——"

"I cannot listen to this, even from you," exclaimed the merchant, impatiently. "Let us drop the subject."

"But I can't drop it! I won't drop it!" replied the former, nervously. "You have disappointed me sadly, Richard; I knew you were as obstinate as a mule, but never suspected before that you could be positively wicked. Your conduct, I repeat, is unlike a father, unlike a man of business. When a house fails, no sensible creditor closes the account by thrusting their acceptances into the fire. No; he waits for a dividend, and Rachel's marriage, properly treated, will still pay twenty shillings in the pound."

Despite his anger, Mr. Bentley could not avoid smiling at an argument drawn from the daily pursuits of the speaker.

"Could any one in his senses," continued the old man, "unless he *wished* to ruin him, have given a young fellow in George's state of excitement, a thousand pounds?"

"It was his right, Peter," observed the merchant.

"No, it was not. Rachel is not yet of age. It will all be lost in some dreadful speculation! His calculations must prove false, for his brain is no longer cool. He will be ruined, and his father-in-law gratified. I feel much better now; I have relieved my mind," added the clerk. "I knew I ought to quarrel with you, and it's done. There are the keys of the iron safe, Mr. Bentley; there are the books, *and you may send for an accountant to go through them* as soon as you please."

Peter Mangles took down his hat from the peg where he had been in the habit of hanging it for nearly forty years, pulled it over his brow with an air of intense determination, and prepared to leave the room.

"You cannot mean to leave me?" exclaimed his astounded friend and employer.

"Indeed but I do, Richard."

The words were evidently uttered with a violent effort, and vibrated on the heart of his hearer.

"And what shall I do without you?"

"*Can't imagine;* but badly enough, no doubt," replied Peter, all but crying.

"And the firm, the edifice we have both so laboriously reared; the first house in the city? I can never trust the books to any one else."

This was Peter's weak point, perhaps his only one; but he looked upon the firm as something he had assisted to create, and for the first time his resolution wavered.

"You have a nephew," he muttered.

"Carus is a good young man, but he has not your experience," observed the merchant. "Come, come, old friend, take back the keys; we began the race of life together, and must not separate at the close of our career. The disobedient ones deserve a lesson."

"Well! well! perhaps they do," murmured the old clerk, trying to conceal his tears, "provided *it is a wise one.*"

"Leave all things to time," added Mr. Bentley; "the truest judge."

It is more than probable that the speaker was sincere when he thus hinted at the possibility of a future reconciliation with his offending child; at any rate, Peter believed him to be so, for he walked back to his desk not without a certain air of satisfaction, hung up his hat, and, in a few minutes forgot all that had taken place in the columns of figures before him.

It is not to be supposed that the old man's talents for business were the only considerations which induced the wealthy merchant to make this seeming concession. They had been companions in boyhood. It was the money of Peter Mangles which gave him his first start in business, and his name had long since appeared in the firm but for his constant and repeated refusal of the offer.

"No! no! Richard," he used to say, whenever the subject was broached, "I am very well as I am; have more money than I know how to spend. I may be a good servant, but I should lose all confidence in myself were I a principal. You will find me much better as your clerk than your partner." And a clerk he remained.

As Peter Mangles predicted, the thousand pounds proved an injury rather than a benefit to George Hoffman and his sorrowing wife. Instead of taking a situation, the young man started in business on his own account. For some time he struggled bravely; a helping hand might have saved him, and changed embarrassment into prosperity; but there was no one to stretch it forth. Despite his exertions, the crash came at last, and brought ruin in its train.

The creditors, satisfied that he had acted honorably by them, spared him the shame of seeing his name in the *Gazette*, contented themselves with taking everything, and left him a beggared man.

There is a latent strength—a power of endurance, in woman's nature, unknown to man—unsuspected even by herself, until the hour of trial calls it forth to exercise a healing ministry, pour the sweet balm of consolation on the wounds the world has irritated, heal the galled mind, and whisper future hope.

Such a consoling angel did Rachel prove to her unhappy husband. Never had she appeared more cheerful, or smiled upon him so tenderly, as in the hour of misfortune; the task was a painful one, but a wife's and mother's love sustained her; and if at times, when alone in the cheerless lodgings to which they had removed, she felt her courage fail her, a glance at the cradle of her first-born restored it.

For several months George Hoffman remained without employment. To a mind naturally active, idleness is a fearful counsellor. In poor or rich, it matters not which, it generally leads to vice, unstrings the heart, renders its feelings morbid, robs morality of its tone, and manhood of its energy.

It was not long before the unhappy man yielded to the sad influence, which betrayed its presence in the most debasing form, by leading him to drink.

Frequently would he resolve to break the fatal spell, and promise his wife, who felt both shocked and alarmed, to abstain from the intoxicating draught which stole away his reason; but the draught, unfortunately for his happiness, was too cunningly mixed—a hand he could not see prepared it, and his promises were no sooner made than broken.

In consequence of this degrading vice, its wretched victim lost situation after situation, till at last he could procure no regular employment, and became reduced to write for a law stationer in Parliament-street, who only gave him work occasionally; for the man had a staff of steady, respectable copyists, on whose regularity he could depend, and he felt it a duty not to let them remain idle.

Thus, year after year, the Hoffman's descended in the social scale, till they took up their abode in the cottage in the Belvedere-road, where a second child, a girl, was born in poverty and misery.

On more than one occasion an appeal had been made to the paternal feelings of Mr. Bentley, but he continued inexorable. His pride was too deeply stung; and, let us add, his affection.

Frequently, when returning home of an evening from his club, the wealthy merchant had encountered his son-in-law and a worthless companion named Styles, whom he had turned from his employ for irregularity, rolling in the street drunk, and the sight had so disgusted him that his heart became harder than ever. Little did the father of Rachel imagine that these encounters had been cleverly arranged, and still less did he suspect by whom.

Equal care had been taken that Peter Mangles should witness the same revolting spectacle, and it grieved the old man sadly; for he had a horror of excess—*it was so unbusiness like.* The kindliness of his nature, however, did not allow him to abandon Rachel, whom he continued to assist from time to time, sparingly indeed, for fear her husband should expend the money in dissipation, but always with words of good advice, and without solicitation.

It is now time that we should speak of the offspring of this unhappy marriage—we do not use the term unhappy in the ordinary acceptation of the word, for affection yet lingered in the hearts of both. Despite his habits of intemperance, George still fondly loved his wife, who never forgot, even in the hardest of her trials, that he was the lover of her youth, the husband of her choice, the father of her children. There was the tie, the golden link in affection's chain which bound her: had it been iron, it must long since have broken.

Richard, the eldest of the children—he had been named after his grandfather—was now in his thirteenth year; and despite the privation in which he had been reared, not only a handsome, but a well-grown, healthy boy. He had his father's intelligent, open brow and clustering hair, joined with his mother's deep blue, thoughtful eyes, and much of her gentle, affectionate disposition; his strength was in his heart. Nature had done more for him than education. True, he could read and write, and possessed a slight knowledge of arithmetic. There his instruction ended.

Devotedly fond of his mother and little sister Mary—a fairy-like, lovely child, now six years old—Richard did everything in his power to alleviate the sorrow he shared, and render their home less cheerless during the frequent absence of his father at the tavern.

"I shall soon be strong enough to work for both of you," he frequently exclaimed, "and then there shall be no more want."

On hearing this, Mary would clap her tiny hands, laugh, and make him promise to buy her a new frock, whilst Rachel smiled through her tears.

There is something noble as well as touching in the love of a fine manly boy for his mother. It is the green sapling which may one day become a staff for her declining age, and repay—if it be possible for a child ever to repay them—the cares and tenderness lavished upon his infant years. It is a bright promise—a germ of hope—the spring-time of a happy future.

CHAPTER II.

But whilst in peace abiding
Within a shelter'd home,
We feel as sin and evil
Could never, never come;
But let the strong temptation rise—
As whirlwinds sweep the sea—
We find no strength to escape the wreck,
Save pitying God, in Thee. MRS. HALE.

It was the last day of the parting year, and the Hoffmans were seated at the scantily-spread breakfast in their clean but humble cottage. George, whose eyes were still bloodshot, his throat parched from the excess of the preceding night, refused to eat anything, although he eagerly drank the tea his patient wife poured out for him. True, it was exceedingly weak—but it quenched his burning thirst, and calmed the feverish excitement which caused his hand to shake as he raised the cup to his lips.

There was very little bread and no butter on the table; the money which should have purchased a fresh supply had been spent at the tavern. Rachel divided it silently between the children, reserving only a small crust for herself.

"I am not hungry, mother," whispered her son, putting the largest portion of his back; "and you ate nothing last night."

Little Mary, too young to comprehend the misery around her, began eagerly to eat her share.

The father felt moved, as most drunkards do, at a reproach, even when it is an indirect one.

"You were playing with Jack Manders last night," he observed, in an angry tone of voice; "don't let me hear that you do so again."

"You shall not, sir," replied Richard, respectfully; for his mother had studiously inculcated in his youthful mind the lesson of obedience.

"I like Jack," exclaimed Mary, laughingly; "he gave me a cake last night."

"You should not have taken it," said George Hoffman.

"O, but I like cakes," replied the child, "*and was so hungry.*"

Rachel pressed the little speaker in her arms to prevent her saying more, and did not even regard her husband; woman-like, she wished to spare him the humiliation. The child, however, was not so easily satisfied, but persevered in her questions.

"Why don't you like Jack?" she continued.

"Because his father was a thief, my love," was the reply; "and the uncle, with whom the boy lives, is a returned convict. He is training his nephew badly."

Mary did not exactly understand what the words thief and convict meant.

To prevent further conversation on the subject, George Hoffman rose from the breakfast-table, with the air of a man who feels dissatisfied with himself, and proceeded to a smaller one, covered with law papers, near the window. Several times he attempted to write, but his hand shook so that he found it impossible to proceed.

"How nervous I am this morning," he muttered, at the same time throwing down the pen impatiently.

His wife regarded him mournfully. Memory recalled the time when he was a far different being.

"I must take a turn in the fresh air," he added, "to set me right."

Rachel knew by bitter experience what setting him right meant. The tavern! the dram!

The unhappy victim of dissipation took up his hat and quitted the cottage, without daring to cast a look on those whom he had so cruelly injured. He had no money with him—a circumstance, unfortunately, but of little consequence; he could always obtain credit at "The Crown and Magpie," Westminister, his obliging friend, Styles, being answerable for his score.

And yet the dupe continued blind!

"You will wait for my return, Richard, said his mother, after a pause, during which she had reflected on the possible consequences of her son's intimacy with Jack Manders, and resolved, at any sacrifice—even to that of parting with him—to put an end to it.

The boy promised; and Rachel, taking the last trinket she possessed—a locket, containing her father's hair—from a small workbox, prepared to leave the house to dispose of it. The rent was due that very day, and she had not a shilling to meet it. As the broken-hearted creature gazed on the memorial of other days, recollections of her home, and the love that had surrounded her there, crowded upon her, memory's and feeling's fountains were alike unsealed, and, sinking on a chair, she wept bitterly.

"Don't cry, mother," exclaimed her son, throwing his arms around her neck and kissing her; "I cannot bear to see it."

"My tears are for you, Richard," answered his parent.

"For me!"

"Should you yield to temptation, follow the example of your evil companion, and become, like him, a thief, it would kill me."

"No fear of that, mother," replied the boy, drawing himself proudly up; "I would starve first. But I can't—I won't see you starve," he added, with a burst of feeling, "if I can prevent it."

"Honestly," sobbed Rachel, "say honestly, Richard."

"I meant honestly, of course" murmured the lad, in an undertone.

Somewhat reassured, the anxious woman left the house to dispose of her last resource, and in less than an hour returned, but only with a few shillings. One was spent in purchasing food, the rest carefully wrapped in an old cambric handkerchief and placed in the workbox, which neither her husband nor the children ever touched, knowing how dearly she prized it.

Leaving by far the largest portion of the food she had obtained by so painful a sacrifice for George, his wife, accompanied by her son, who carried Mary in his arms, set out for Blackheath. She had resolved to implore the assistance of Peter Mangles, not for herself, but for her boy, to save him from crime and shame. She could have consented to a far greater humiliation. He was her pride—her hope—her life's last stay.

"He will not refuse me," she thought; "the good old man will aid me."

Doubtless the hope of the speaker would have been realised had she seen him, but, unfortunately, New Year's eve was the only day in the year on which her friend dined and spent the evening with the clerks of the firm.

When George Hoffman returned to the cottage, he was surprised to find Rachel and the children absent. As the hour passed, the feeling changed to annoyance. He disliked being alone, for solitude brought reflection. To occupy the time he seated himself at the table, and began to write; but he loathed the task, which became doubly painful as the dram lost its effects, and his hand again became unsteady.

In this irritable state of mind he heard a peculiar whistle.

"You may come in," he said, opening the door; "my wife is not here."

A sullen, hard-featured man, with beetle brows, shabby-genteelly dressed, lounged into the room. It was his evil genius, Tom Styles.

"Alone!" exclaimed the fellow, looking around him with the air of a broker taking stock of the furniture.

"Rachel is absent," replied her husband.

"So much the better," said the tempter, with a sneer. "There is a match at 'The Crown and Magpie;' won't you come?"

"Can't."

"Why not?"

"I have no money."

On any other occasion, Styles would have offered to frank him; but the present one was too favorable an opportunity for his purpose to permit such an act of liberality.

"That's a pity," he observed, "for Bob is sure to win; and something might be made on it. There will be rare sport. Have you nothing to pawn or sell?"

"Nothing," murmured the wretched man; "all has been parted with."

His visitor looked round the room a second time, but saw nothing that would fetch even a few shillings, till his eye rested on the workbox.

"Rather a pretty thing that," he observed, advancing to take it up.

"Don't touch it," cried George Hoffman, stepping between the speaker and the subject of his curiosity; "it is my poor wife's—my first gift to her. We have wanted bread, but I never had the heart to ask her to part with that."

"More fool you, then," said Styles sneeringly. "What is in it?"

"Only a few letters."

"And money?"

"Money!" repeated the drunkard; "where should Rachel procure money? It is long since her—

The speaker suddenly paused. He had taken the box in his hands, and something rattled inside; it sounded like silver.

Styles laughed ironically.

"I told you there was money in it!" he exclaimed.

George Hoffman slowly raised the lid, as if afraid of his own act. At the bottom of the box were four half-crowns and a shilling.

"It is for the rent," he exclaimed. "She has sold the locket her father gave her," he added, after examining the rest of the contents. "It would be sacrilege to touch it."

"Of course it would, although you might win pounds with it."

"Pounds!" repeated his dupe, with a bewildered look.

"And pass a pleasant night into the bargain."

"How so?"

"Didn't I tell you there was to be a match at cribbage between Bob and Harry Turner?" replied the ruffian. "Bob is sure to win."

"No, no!" cried the drunkard, greatly excited; "it would be base—unmanly! Fallen, degraded, lost as I am, I cannot descend to rob my wife!"

"Rob!" repeated his visitor. "How can a man rob his wife? What's hers is his; he can take everything but her wedding-ring. I've heard Sneak, the lawyer's clerk, say so a dozen times. But as you please," he added, "as you please. I'm off to 'The Crown and Magpie.' A pleasant evening to you, and a *happy* new year."

The last words were uttered in a mocking tone, as the speaker quitted the cottage of the man whose moral ruin he had so nearly effected. He walked slowly up the Belvedere-road, and lingered on Westminster Bridge, in the expectation that his dupe would overtake him, for he knew how weak his resolutions were. For once, however, he was disappointed—he arrived at the tavern alone.

Had Rachel returned, there is little doubt that her husband would have remained firm, or, at the worst, asked her for a portion of the money; but as night drew on, and the wretched man sat alone, without fire or light, in his miserable home, the nervous impatience—the burning thirst—the desire for excitement grew stronger: he could resist no longer.

"I may win," he muttered, as he took the contents of the box.

A deep blush—the silent reproach of his unworthy action—mantled on his cheek as he did so; but the mad fever in his blood proved stronger than the sense of shame, or the reproaches of a half-stifled conscience. The next instant he was in the street; the means of intoxication in his pocket, home and wife were forgotten.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Rachel and her children, weary and foot-sore, reached their desolate abode.

"Are you here, George?" she asked, as she crossed the threshold.

There was no reply. Oh, how bitterly did the silence fall upon her heart!

Little Mary began to ask for food.

"Directly, my love," said her distracted mother, "directly." The rent—the threat of the landlord of turning them into the street—the impossibility of replacing the sum—were alike forgotten at the cry of her child. She groped her way to the little table, caught up the work-box, and opened it—the money was gone!

For the first time since her marriage the lips of Rachel curled in scorn at the heartless conduct of the man for whom she had sacrificed so much, who had sworn at the altar to be a protector to her—it was but a momentary feeling—grief mastered anger, and she sank heart-crushed on a chair.

"What is the matter, mother?" exclaimed Richard, placing his sister, whom he had hitherto held in his arms, upon the floor, and running to her.

"Nothing! nothing! only a momentary weakness. I—I am better now."

George must not be made to blush before his boy, she thought. I will not destroy the respect of the child for his father.

The resolution was a womanly, but a useless one. Her son more than suspected the cause of her grief.

"We will go and seek your father," she said, at the same time taking Mary in her arms, "and then you shall have food, my love."

"But I want it now," sobbed the child. "I am so hungry."

He cannot have spent it all, thought Rachel; something must be left.

Richard said nothing; but his reflections were dangerous. He compared the warning his father had given him on the subject of Jack Manders, and the abstraction of the contents of the work-box.

Lessons of virtue and honesty, without the practice, seldom make a lasting impression, even from a parent's lips.

There was a great crowd at the bar of The Crown and Magpie. The landlady—a stout, vulgar-looking woman, with red ribbons in her cap, a profusion of false curls, a heavy gold chain round her neck, and numerous rings on her fat fingers—was busily engaged in pouring out gin for her customers; the regular ones she was treating—for it must not be forgotten that it was New Year's eve.

Such was the scene of vice and dissipation which met the eye and sickened the heart of Rachel when, with little Mary in her arms, and protected by the presence of her son, she ventured into the house.

"Is Mr. Hoffman here?" she inquired, faintly.

The question had to be repeated several times before she could get an answer.

"Can't tell the names of any of my customers," replied the mistress of The Crown and Magpie, snappishly.

"Perhaps you will oblige me by ascertaining."

"Too busy, ma'm! Hot water, Sally! Three and eight-pence, sir. Half-and-half, directly!

"You can't go in there!" shouted the landlady, as Rachel was making her way towards the parlor. "Mine is a respectable house; I allow no females beyond the bar."

"But I am Mr. Hoffman's wife."

"*So they all say*," answered the woman, with a sneer.

There was a coarse, mocking laugh from the crowd of half-drunken wretches standing near. The eyes of Richard flashed angrily; but the voice, and still more, the imploring look of his mother restrained him.

"Let us return home," she said, in a despairing tone. "I feel faint and sick at heart."

And leaning on the arm of her son, the unhappy wife tottered rather than walked from the place.

The keen, frosty air partially restored her strength; and Rachel proceeded with her children till she reached the thoroughfare leading through St. Margaret's churchyard towards the Almonry, when a faint moan from Mary, whom she still carried in her arms, arrested her steps. She placed her hand under the thin, faded shawl which covered her; the child was cold as ice, and shivering, as if seized with an ague fit.

"She is dying!" groaned the terror-stricken parent—"dying for want of food!"

The heart of her boy could endure no more—it was breaking. The cup of misery and endurance had been filled to overflowing. His brain was on fire—tears could not quench it.

"Take her home, mother!" he cried—"take her home! never fear but I will bring you food! Mary shan't die! I'll beg—beg," he added; "anything to save her!"

"Richard! Richard! do not leave me!" shrieked his agonized parent. "Let me not lose both my children! if you love your mother, return—for pity's sake return!"

The appeal came too late. Her son, stung, maddened beyond endurance by the sufferings of those so dear to him, had broken from her feeble grasp, darted down the thoroughfare, and was already beyond the reach of her voice.

Rachel clung to the railings of the churchyard for support, till a second moan, fainter than the first, sent a pang through her maternal heart.

"She must not die in the street!" murmured Rachel. "Home—home! if I have strength to reach it."

"Oh, God!" she cried, with a sudden burst of anguish, "protect my boy! Shield him from crime; guard him against the vices and the hideous snares which in a thousand forms assail unfriended youth; or take him," she added, solemnly, "take him in Thy mercy."

It was a Christian's prayer wrung from a mother's heart, uttered in faith, in agony, and tears; and angels bore it to the mercy seat on high.

Clasping her perishing child yet closer to her aching bosom, the drunkard's wife hastened towards her home.

When Richard Hoffman, yielding to the promptings of despair, quitted his mother and sister in the street, it was with the fixed resolve of procuring them food. He felt as if he could have torn it from the jaws of a hungry tiger, rather than return without it. The plaintive moans of little Mary, the cry of her distracted parent, rang in his ears; and he continued to run, heedless of the course he took, till he found himself in St. James's park, where he relaxed his speed, and paused to recover breath.

"What am I to do?" he asked himself; "there is no succor here."

"What am I to do?" he exclaimed, as he passed the long range of leafless trees, whose skeleton arms he more than imagined waved menacingly above his head, as they moved in the night wind's pitiless blast; "there is no succor here."

The scene was in truth a desolate one. Snow upon the ground; snow, crisp to the tread, and cold as the world's charity. The evergreens in the inclosure bent beneath its weight; and the lake one sheet of solid ice, save where the keepers had broken it for the wild fowl, whose mournful, solitary cry startled, at intervals, the silence of the night.

By way of contrast with this dreary picture, broad gleams of light were streaming from the windows of one of the splendid mansions upon Carlton-terrace; sounds of music heard, and shadows distinctly seen upon the curtains, as the young, the gay, and happy, flitted past them in the dance.

The boy regarded them wistfully.

"If they only knew," he thought; "if they only knew."

There are but too many of the favored children of fortune who take care *not to know*—who guard their feelings as strictly as they do their game, and look on poverty as a poacher interfering with their sport.

Our hero was not the only person in the park whose attention had been excited by the contrast which the scene within and the scene without the house afforded. A tall, well-dressed man stood listening to the music and regarding the windows. Richard approached, with the intention of imploring assistance; but when the moonlight revealed the stern features of the gentleman, his heart failed him, and he walked on, determined to try the next person whom he encountered.

He had not proceeded far before he met a lad of his own age, who, after regarding him for an instant, to convince himself that he was not mistaken, called to him to stop.

It was the youth his father that very morning had warned him against—Jack Manders!

Jack was a perfect type of the thorough-bred London street-boy—wiry as a terrier, agile as a squirrel, slippery as an eel, cunning as a fox, and experienced beyond his years. Yet all was not bad in him. It was the training that had twisted and distorted the plant; in a better soil, and in careful hands, it might have grown straight enough. From the time he had first known our hero, Jack had taken a great liking to him. Other lads scoffed and reproached him with his father's being a convicted felon. Richard never alluded to it. He was fond, too, of little Mary; and frequently showed his partiality by buying her fruit or cakes.

Although half a head shorter than Richard, he was much stronger, and his limbs were muscular; perhaps it was because he was better fed.

"You here!" he exclaimed, in a tone of unfeigned surprise; "vel, I never! Wot's your game?" Seeing that the youth did not understand him, he added, "What brings you here?"

"I scarcely know," replied the boy, dashing aside a tear. "I am half mad. My mother and sister are hungry—starving! And I came to——"

His heart was too full. He could not pronounce the word "beg."

"See if you could pick up anything," said his acquaintance, finishing the sentence for him; "and very right, too. I'd do anything rather than see my mother or sister starve, if I had 'em."

"How do you live, Jack?" demanded Richard. "You have always money: and are so warmly clothed."

"O—I live by my work," replied the lad.

"At what work?"

Jack Manders felt rather embarrassed for an answer.

"*You know*," he said, after a pause, at the same time favoring our hero with an exceedingly knowing wink.

"Indeed, I do not," observed our hero, innocently.

"Well, then, I help myself to what I can."

"A thief!" exclaimed his hearer, with a shudder. "I am sorry for you—very sorry, Jack; for you have been kind to me and Mary."

"It ain't my fault," muttered the young pickpocket, sullenly, "I asked for work—real work, I mean—often enough; no one would give it me, because my dad was a convict; they all flung that in my teeth. You never did, and that's why I like you. I wanted to go for a soldier, but was too young. I even went to the penitentiary to ask for something to get an honest living by; they could do nothing for me—they said *I hadn't been convicted*. It was a hard time for me," he added. "Uncle used to kick me out of the house, and tell me to go and earn bread. *At last he showed me how to earn it*, and I have never wanted food, clothes or money since. No more sleeping under the arches, but in a comfortable bed—no more hunger. Why shouldn't you do the same?"

"Not whilst I can work," replied our hero.

"Work!" repeated Jack, with a laugh. "Who'd give you work? My father was a thief, and yours is a drunkard: there ain't much difference. And as for begging, *only try it!* and see how soon the peelers will grab you. Bless you?" he added, in a confidential tone, "the beaks punishes it as bad as prigging; a month at the mill is the least they gives for it."

Richard Hoffman wrung his hands in despair.

"There ain't no danger," continued the speaker, in a whisper, "if you only keeps your senses about you I'll show you how it's done. Do you see that cove a starin' at the winders? Just watch me, and see how quickly I'll clean him out."

The person to whom he pointed was the old gentleman whom his companion had previously noticed, and who, regardless alike of the cold and lateness of the hour, still remained with his eyes fixed upon the mansion, and plunged in a profound reverie.

Perhaps he was contrasting it with the home of his own childhood; or, sadder still, one from which mirth and music had long since fled.

"No, no," exclaimed our hero.

"I wouldn't let my mother and sister starve," repeated Jack, whose motive was rather the desire of securing a comrade whom he could like and trust, than a desire to degrade him to his own level.

"Neither can I," muttered the youth, with desperate resolution.

The speakers advanced slowly towards the gentleman whose back was turned to them. Jack, all confidence, and proud of an opportunity of displaying his skill and hardihood to his companion, who began once more to hesitate, lag behind, and tremble at every step.

Suddenly he stopped.

"Come on," whispered his companion.

"Impossible!" said Richard. "I can starve, but will never become a thief!"

The mother's prayer was heard!

At first the pickpocket felt inclined to be angry; but he recollected the time when he had entertained the same scruples.

"See me, then," he whispered. "I'll do it."

A mist seemed to pass before the eyes of our hero; he never had more than a confused recollection of what followed. He heard Jack cry, "Run, run!" as a policeman, who had been watching them from behind the trunk of a tree, sprang from his place of concealment and attempted to seize him. The culprit escaped, and Richard was a prisoner.

"I've got one of the varmints, at any rate," exclaimed the officer of police.

"What's the matter?" demanded the gentleman, starting from his reverie.

"You have been robbed, sir."

"I am no thief, sir," cried Richard, breaking from the strong grasp that held him, and throwing himself at the feet of the stranger, "though poverty and hunger tempted me to become one. My mother and sister are starving."

"A likely story," said his captor, who had drawn his truncheon, and once more secured him. But the poor boy clung so desperately to the gentleman whom his companion had robbed, and pleaded so eloquently, that the heart of the stranger was touched.

"His story may be true," he said. "No violence, policeman. I believe you know me?"

The policeman touched his hat.

"What is your name, boy?"

"Richard Hoffman, sir," replied the boy, hesitatingly.

The gentleman repeated it slowly after him.

"And have you a father?" he added.

"Yes, sir."

"What is he?"

"He was formerly a clerk in the city; but his employer dismissed him for marrying my mother without his consent; and since then he has been anything, I believe, sir."

Perhaps it was eccentricity—perhaps a better feeling; but the gentleman not only determined to spare the youth the shame of being sent to a prison, but—if his tale proved true—to snatch him from the perils of poverty, by giving him a chance of living honestly.

"Did this lad actually take my pocket-book?" he said, turning to the policeman.

"Well, no, your honor; can't swear that he did. But he was with the young rascal who has got it; and——"

"Enough," interrupted the questioner; "the loss is not a very serious one. Follow me to the gate with your prisoner, and procure me a cab. "Boy," he added, "I will give you one chance of redeeming yourself, and becoming an honest man, by placing you where you shall be well taken care of.

"And my mother! My poor mother!"

"If she possesses a right feeling," answered the stranger, "she will rejoice at your escape from crime."

"Never!" exclaimed Richard Hoffman; "the suspense, the agony, would kill her."

"Take him to prison," said the gentleman, turning to the policeman.

The threat prevailed. The prison, our hero well knew, would be worse than suspense, or even death itself, to his fond parent.

"I will go with you, sir," he faltered.

Poor fellow! his heart was almost broken. More than once the idea of escape presented itself as his captors conducted him from the park through the canteen into Parliament-street, but he was too closely guarded. The cab was called, and he entered it, accompanied by the man who, either for good or evil, appeared to have taken such a singular interest in his fate.

Before driving off, he noticed that he placed a sovereign in the hands of the policeman.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

BROTHER TOM'S WIFE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"If you do marry that girl, brother Tom, I'll have nothing to do with her. I won't visit her, nor call her sister, nor speak to her!"

And Lizzie Lawton put on as outraged and indignant an air as it was possible for her to assume.

"What's the objection?" asked brother Tom, in his cool way, fixing his large, calm eyes upon the pretty face of his sister, as she sat uneasily swaying half around and back again on the piano stool.

"Objection!" The young lady's cherry lip curled. "Who is she? What is she?"

"A sweet-tempered, right-thoughted, true-hearted young woman, who will make me a good little wife. Are you answered, sister mine?"

"A sewing-girl!" said Lizzie, contemptuously.

"What our mother was, as I have been told, before her marriage," answered brother Tom. "And, if my eyes have not deceived me, she has been a sewing woman ever since, or, at least, ever since my recollection of her."

"That's another thing," said the sister. "Mother was superior to her class, and has risen above it."

"Suppose I answer your objection to Harriet, and say that she is superior to her class, and will rise above it? What then? My father made a good matrimonial venture, and I may do the same."

"But why, brother Tom," urged the sister, "don't you choose a wife from among those on your own level?"

"What do you mean by those on our own level? Let us understand each other."

"From among those who move in our own circles. From the educated, refined and accomplished."

"Such as the Misses Waltons, for instance?"

"Yes; or the Misses Edens."

"Whose fathers support them in idleness, and expect the young men who marry them to do the same. Now, Lizzie, the fact of the business is, I like Mary Eden very well, and once came so near falling in love with her, that I was really frightened. I did not go near her pretty face for six months after I felt the first movement of the tender passion."

"Dear Mary! O, Tom! Why not marry her? I could love her as my own sister."

"Can't afford it, petty. I'm but a poor young man, and have only my talents and industry to help me forward in the world. Mary can't do anything herself, and would expect me to put her in an establishment but little less costly than the one her father owns."

"Oh, but, Tom, there'll be no necessity for going to housekeeping at first. And then, you know, her father is well off in the world, and he'll give her a house, and furnish it, no doubt, when she is married."

But Tom shook his head.

"Mary Eden's father," he replied, "may or may not be rich. My own private opinion is, that he is living up to, if not a little beyond, his income. And as to the house and furniture which Mary's husband is going to get, that is something very fine to feed a fancy upon. The real bricks and mortar is another affair."

"Oh, but Mr. Eden is rich, Tom."

"The rich men of to-day are our poor men of to-morrow, Lizzie. I wouldn't give the snap of a finger for a rich father-in-law as a dependence. I mean to trust in myself, an honest purpose and a clear conscience. And as for a wife, I want a woman with life, purpose, industry and independence in her, not a great bundle of silks, laces, bonnets and curl papers, with a pretty little helpless do-nothing—and I had almost said know-nothing—doll hidden somewhere inside, three or four feet from the crinoline circumvallation. And then, again, Lizzie, I am something of an independent young man, wonderfully given to the work of taking care of myself. I happen to be at the bottom of the ladder, and if I ever get to the top of it my own strength will carry me there. Now, a wife on my back, instead of on the rounds of the ladder, keeping step with me upwards, would be a dead weight, and keep me at or near the foot forever. No, no, petty, I cannot afford one of your finished boarding-school misses for a wife—the luxury is too expensive for me. So, I am going to marry a girl who knows something of real life—a true, good, patient, enduring, self-denying, sweet, darling little body, who is not ashamed to earn her living with the needle. And I can tell you what, Dolly, I only wish you were more like Harriet Parker; there would be forty chances in favor of your marrying a man of sense where you have one now. Don't you know that a new society has been formed among the young men, and that some of the very best 'catches' among them have signed a pledge not to marry any girl who is not willing to commence matrimonial life with two rooms and a kitchen, and who doesn't know how to bake, cook and sew, and to wash and iron into the bargain? I am the president."

"Preposterous!" exclaimed Lizzie.

"You'll cry some other word when you get on the old maids' list, and see your place filled in the home of some man that is a man by a woman who was not ashamed of useful employment when she was a girl. I can tell you what, my dainty little sister, there's a reform at work, and men worth having are beginning to choose between no marriage or marriage with girls of plainer notions and more useful accomplishments than are possessed by the butterflies who lounge on sofas all day, knitting zephyr or reading novels. So make up your mind to a reform or old-maidism. And now, as in all probability you understand that I am quite in earnest about marrying Harriet Parker, I hope you will reconsider your hasty resolution about not speaking to your sister-in-law. The loss, let me tell you, will be all on your own side."

Brother Tom understood his own position entirely. He was not a man to stoop below himself in marrying. He could not unite himself with one who was ignorant and unrefined—against that his generously cultivated soul would have revolted. But he wanted a real, not an artificial, woman—one who could take her place beside him, as he had said, on the lowest round of fortune's ladder, and keep step with her upward. Such a one he had found in Harriet Parker, and he was independent enough to make her his wife.

Lizzie was not long in discovering after brother Tom actually got married and commenced housekeeping in two rooms, with his modest, cheerful, earnest-minded wife, that her new sister had about her something that insensibly won the love, commanded the respect, and almost extorted the admiration, of all who were so fortunate as to make her acquaintance.

"Marriage, they say, makes or mars a man," the brother overheard Lizzie once saying, in an undertone, to a lady friend. "But it will not mar the fortunes of brother Tom. He's got just the wife to keep him along in the world; and one that will grace any position to which they may rise."

"My own sentiments exactly, petty," spoke out brother Tom. "She's a jewel, and worth a thousand of your paste and tinsel women. Didn't I tell you so? But you couldn't believe me. Now, if you'll go and apprentice yourself to a dressmaker, or a milliner, or learn to do any useful work—useful, not simply ornamental, I mean—I will recommend you to the new president of the society I told you about. I had to resign when I got married. He's a splendid specimen, and will make a husband worthy of a queen."

FRIENDSHIP.

Young men have commonly an unguarded frankness about them, which makes them an easy prey for the artful and experienced. They are too apt to look upon every knave or fool who tells them that he is their friend, to be really so—and hence, too often, loss and ruin follow. Beware, therefore, of proffered friendship—receive all with civility, but be slow to give your confidence. Do not let your vanity and self-love make you suppose that people become your friends at first sight, or even upon a short acquaintance. *Real* friendship is of slow growth. Friendship hastily produced is too much like what the poet describes:

> "And what is friendship but a name,
> A charm that lulls to sleep,
> A shade that follows wealth and fame,
> And leaves the wretch to weep."

WORK IF YOU WOULD RISE.

Richard Burke being found in a reverie shortly after an extraordinary display of powers in Parliament by his brother, Edmund Burke, and questioned by a friend as to the cause, replied—"I have been wondering how Ned has contrived to monopolize all the talents of the family; but then, again, I remember, when we were at play, he was always at work." The force of this anecdote is increased by the fact, that Richard Burke was considered not inferior, in natural talents, to his brother. Yet the one rose to greatness, while the other died comparatively obscure. Don't trust to your genius, young man, if you would rise, but work—work!

TRUE POLITENESS.

As to politeness, many have attempted definitions of it. I believe it is best known by description, definition not being able to comprise it. I would, however, venture to call it "benevolence in trifles," or the preference of others to ourselves in little, daily, hourly occurrences in the commerce of life. It is a perpetual attention to the little wants of those with whom we are, by which attention we either prevent or remove them. Bowing, ceremonious, formal compliments, stiff civilities, will never be politeness; that must be easy, natural, unstudied, manly, noble. And what will give this but a mind benevolent and perpetually attentive to exert that amiable disposition in trifles to all you converse or live with?

ANTS OF BUSINESS.

Nothing is more interesting than to see an army of ants engaged in divesting a tree of its foliage. In doing so, they manifest an intuitive system and order which is truly surprising. A regular file is continually ascending on one side of the trunk, while another is descending upon the opposite side, each one of the ants bearing a piece of a leaf of the size of a sixpence in his mouth. A large number appear to be stationed among the upper branches, for the sole purpose of biting off the stems of the leaves, and thus causing them to fall to the ground. At the foot of the tree is another department, whose business is evidently that of cutting the fallen leaves into small pieces for transportation. A long procession is kept constantly marching, laden with the leaves.

* * *

EXCESSIVE POLITENESS.—A story is told of a very polite sheriff, who came near being outdone by a person it was the line of his duty to hang. "Sir," said the gentleman, as the sheriff was carefully adjusting the rope, "really your attention deserves my thanks. In fact, I do not know of one I should rather have hang me." "Really," said the sheriff, "you are pleased to be complimentary. I do not know of another individual it would give me so much pleasure to hang."

* * *

KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE.—He who sets out on the journey of life with a profound knowledge of books, but a shallow knowledge of men—with much sense of others, and little of his own—will find himself as completely at a loss in cases of common and constant recurrence as a Dutchman withwithout his pipe, a Frenchman without his mistress, an Italian without his fiddle, or an Englishman without his umbrella.

* * *

A TRANSATLANTIC "IDEA."—A writer beautifully remarks that a man's mother is the representative of his Maker. Misfortunes, and even crime, set up no barriers between her and her son. While his mother lives, a man will have one friend on earth who will not desert him when he is ready to despair. Her affection flows from a pure fountain, and ceases only at the ocean of eternity.

ALLAN, THE CHANGELESS.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Those dreamy eyes, with their intense of blue,
  That poet-brow, so cold and yet so fair,
The proud lips' classic curve, the golden hue
  Asleep like love-light on the wavy hair.
These haunt me ever, these belong to thee—
But who art thou, and what wouldst thou with me?
One half like thee smiled on my childish years—
But he is gone, believe it by my tears.

I smile and gaze, and thou art smiling, too,
  Then shadows rush along my brow, I weep;
Tears tremble in thine eye like drops of dew
  In azure violets, sure thy love is deep.
Thou'rt with me when sweet spring is kissing flowers,
When fairies crowd the summer's dreamy hours,
When autumn's fading charms are blushing red,
And when stern winter's frozen tears are shed.

When splendid sunsets burn in western skies,
  And when dusk twilights sadden o'er the heart;
When night's *far* stars awake my spirit's sighs,
  And when—aye, always, where I am thou art.
Alas, bright boy, my weary way winds on
Where many a ray of love and light is gone;
Shadows and dreary wilds must wait for thee,
If thou wilt try the course fate marked for me.

Then leave me, leave me, linger not an hour—
  Bear thy young beauty and thy love away;
My heart will seem a void, yet I have power
  To live alone, rather than have thee stay
To share such fate as mine—ah, this would be
Too dark, my Allan, for a shape like thee.
Go—ere a shadow settle in thy breast—
Thou wilt not? Then stay with me—I am blest.

THE CROWN JEWELS.

A TALE OF LONDON AND PARIS.

BY DR. HORATIO W. NELSON,

AUTHOR OF "LADY CLAUDINE; OR, THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE," &c., &c., &c.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TWO NOBLEMEN.—A MYSTERY CLEARED UP.

We now request our readers who have so kindly followed the events of our tale thus far, to go with us to the old abbey, and to the rooms of which we left Catharine Varney mistress during the absence of Louis the Count Bienville.

Two weeks have elapsed since the scenes which we have described in the preceding chapter occurred. In the interval incidents have occurred which will now command our attention. It will be remembered that we left Hinchcliff out of prison on bail, and boarding secretly at the Sack Inn, awaiting the day of trial, in order to be present as a witness. His bailor, to the surprise not only of Paul but of all who heard, and of the Lord Mayor himself, we know was Sir Paul Varney. The reader has probably shared in this amazement, and we will now explain the mystery.

When Hinchcliff found himself arrested upon giving his information about the robbery, and fearing that he would be sacrificed, he resolved to send for the magistrate and make a full confession, which he did. He then demanded to be released.

"On bail to appear as witness against Lord Neagle and the Earl of Conybeare, when demanded," was the answer.

Hinchcliff could think of no one—knew no one who would give this security.

"You must then remain in custody."

"Give me pen and ink? I will get bail," he suddenly cried, seeing the officers approach to lead him away.

He wrote as follows:—

> "Magistrate's office, London, January 7.
>
> "To Sir Paul Varney, Baron.—I wish to see you! and at once! I can give you news of your daughter!
>
> "JOHN HINCHCLIFF."

In two hours after this was dispatched, Sir Paul Varney made his appearance. At Hinchcliff's request they were permitted to be alone.

"Well, sir!" said Sir Paul, coldly, "I have received your note! I hear you are under arrest as a participator in this great robbery."

"Men say you drove the Earl to it, by winning all his money!" said the ex-turnkey, with a bitter voice, as if his hatred could not be wholly subdued, even when it was policy for him to appear well disposed; as upon the word of Sir Paul depended his freedom or imprisonment.

"What of my child?"

"I know where she is!" (This was true, as Hinchcliff had accidentally seen Kate standing at the window of the old abbey on the day of his arrest.)

"What is your price?—I see I must buy your knowledge, fellow!"

"My bail! I want security! Some six or eight thousand! I don't know how much. Go my bail and I'll give you up your daughter!"

"Do you swear it?"

"On all the gospels and epistles, too!"

"Can I find her?"

"She is in London!"

"Honorable and virtuous, man?"

"So far as I know—I'll show her to you!"

"Do this and you shall be bailed!"

The baron went into personal recognizances in writing to the magistrate that he would become security for Hinchcliff's reappearance; and the two left the place together in a hackney-coach, the latter first being searched to see that he had no arms whatever, and Sir Paul arming himself to secure his presence with him. Hinchcliff had promised to take him to the very place where his daughter was; and verily did he comply with his pledge. He drove straight to the old abbey, and ordered the coachman to stop at the arched and escutcheoned gate.

"Is this the place?" said Sir Paul, eagerly looking out of the carriage window.

"No," said Hinchcliff, who suddenly conceived the idea of having Sir Paul see his daughter as a stranger, in the hope that he would fall in love and run away with her, and thus afford him a terrible revenge. "I call here to ask the number. I know the servant of a *beautiful young French woman, whose husband is in France,* who lives here *alone.* I merely wish to ask her the number. I have forgotten the house."

"Not without *me,*" answered Sir Paul, who followed him to the door, fearing he meant to deceive him, and escape into the building.

"No fear, Sir Paul. I am not going away. I only want to ask the young woman. There's her mistress, now, at the window. She has heard my knock."

Sir Paul looked up, and caught a glimpse of the beautiful side face of his daughter, but, far from recognizing her, emotions of admiration for her were kindled in his susceptible bosom, ever ready to take fire at the sight of rare female beauty.

"Tell your mistress this gentleman is a French officer, and knows her husband," he said, in a low voice, to Lizette. "He would like to see her! If he calls, treat him civilly."

"And who are you, monsieur?" she was about to ask, but he anticipated her question.

"Me? I am brother to the man that brought your mistress the plants from the cottage." (The villain had actually seen an old acquaintance of his bringing some plants thither, and had invited him to drink at the nearest public house, and of him learned what now stood him in good stead.) "Here's one of the shillings you gave him, which he gave me. He knows all about you, and so do I, and would be glad to serve you. I'm the one that took your mistress' husband to the cars."

"Then you are a good friend."

All this while Sir Paul's eyes and attention were given to the window, through which he occasionally got a glimpse of Catharine's graceful figure.

Some more private conversation passed between the two, and Lizette, nodding and smiling, ran up stairs, a guinea richer than she was when she came down.

"I know now, Sir Paul," said Hinchcliff. "It is the next street where she is."

As he spoke, he proceeded as if he would go back into the coach, and stood aside for Sir Paul, still with pistol in hand, to precede him; as he passed in, Hinchcliff knocked the pistol out of his grasp, pushed him in, and turning the door upon him, ran for his life down the street. In its fall, the pistol went off in the carriage, the horses leaped forward in affright, and dashing against a lamp-post, turned short, overset the hackney-coach, and tearing and kicking themselves violently from it, they ran at full speed up the street. Every one ran to the overturned coach, while the bruised driver hurried after his horses. Sir Paul was found within suffering great pain, and was released only when a dozen men had raised the carriage, the door of which was underneath. They took him out, and he found that he could not stand, his leg having been broken by being caught between the door and the earth, as he was making an effort to get out when the carriage went over.

"Where shall we take you, sir?" said respectfully a policeman, seeing that the injured person was evidently a gentleman.

"I feel in too much pain, just now, to go further than this shop. Let me lie down in there. At this moment some one came up and said, "It is Sir Paul Varney."

At this the constables were very active—the sound of a title in English ears being a talisman of power to command attention—and were about removing him to a better-looking store, when Catharine, who, from the window, had seen the whole affair (and just previously informed by Lizette that it was a French gentleman in the carriage at the door), moved by pity and womanly sympathy, sent her down to bid them convey "the wounded gentleman into her own dwelling." Suffering, as Sir Paul was, with the peculiar severity of the fracture of his limb, this message, as it fell upon his ears, filled him with pleasure, and though he did not say, yet he felt that "if it were to bring him to an acquaintance with so lovely a woman, it were a bliss not dearly bought."

"But find first who he is, Lizette," had been the closing message of her mistress as she descended the stairs. "If he is *not* a gentleman, he must remain in the porter's lodge—if he is, they may bring him up stairs."

"He is a gentleman—a lord—Sir Paul de Varne, or some such name, cried Lizette, running back.

"Then let him be brought up stairs, and placed on the lounge here."

In a few minutes the baron, borne by four strong men, was conveyed into the very dining-room, which before has been mentioned, and laid near the window upon a couch. The sight of the beautiful woman who, with careful words, directed where and how they should lay him, and her sweet, sympathizing looks, filled him with admiration.

"Pardon," he said in French, supposing her to be a French lady, "pardon the trouble I have put you to, madame. I hope soon to be removed to my own rooms. It was the villany of the man who——"

"Do not speak, monsieur. Be quiet as you can. One of these officers will go for a surgeon. You must not think of moving yet. You shall have here every attention you require!"

Hinchcliff, meanwhile, quite overjoyed at the success of his ruse, made his way as rapidly as he could to conceal himself; and after some delay at one place and another, he finally decided on going to the "Sack Inn," where we have seen him engage a room, pledge Paul to secresy, and go and occupy it, on the pretence that he was to wait till the trial, and did not desire to attract attention.

We will now return to Will Wild, who was separated from Botany Bay Paul in the crowd which gathered at the horrible death of Steenie. Terrified at this affair, and not much accustomed to London and its scenes, the country ale-house host, after in vain searching for the mayor's, gave up in despair, and sought his boat. This he found gone. But obtaining another, he reached the Water-Gate Inn, where he heard the news we already know, and in addition to it, that Ralph had taken the young girl he had saved down home with him, as she said she had no money, and the French vessel had got so mingled and lost among the others, he could not find her. At her earnest entreaty not to desert her, he conveyed her to the "Conybeare Arms," where Will found her on her arrival, attracting no little attention from her beauty and helplessness. In the inn also lay Lord Eslington, with an amputated arm, and the Earl of Beresford severely wounded, and both waiting to hear from their families, to which they had communicated their situation and preceding singular, perilous adventures. Bettie and Rose and Ralph, all of whom had given the young noblemen great attention, had also learned their story, from its beginning in Paris on the night of their adventure with the beautiful somnambulist. As for Rose, her heart was deeply touched by the wound of Lord Eslington, and he was not insensible to her pity, nor ungrateful for her attention.

By accident, that evening the young French girl, whose rescue had been spoken of to the two noblemen by Rose, was passing the door of the room of Beresford, when he started from his couch, on which he lay feebly, with an exclamation—

"That is our sleep-walker!"

The young girl was brought into the room, and questioned in French by Beresford. Eslington also saw and recognized her, but she knew nothing of them, wounded and pale as they were. She, with some embarrassment, said—

"I have come to London to declare the innocence of two young English lords, who are accused of murdering the Marquis de ——. I saw a reward offered for them in Paris. I heard the police had come to London, to take them to France in chains. They are innocent; and alone, with scarcely money to come, I got to London, and was coming on shore when my boat was sunk, and I was saved by this young man, Monsieur Ralph. I asked him to tell me where I could find somebody to tell me where I could see the Maire de Londres. He could not tell, but said he would bring me to this inn, and do all he could for me, that I might find out how to save the two milords."

Eslington and Beresford interchanged looks of amazement across the room, on the opposite sides of which they lay.

"Who did this murder?" asked Beresford, full of marvel at such a meeting.

"It was I myself! I am the only daughter of the marquis. He refused to let me marry a young jeweler whom I loved. We quarreled. In my rage I slew him! To conceal the crime, I went out and called two young men, and——"

"We know the rest, murderess, and the cause to us of all our trouble and present wounds," cried Lord Beresford, shaking his open fingers at her with flashing eyes. "Beautiful devil! splendid tigress! We are the two young men! We were taken and bound, and were being conveyed to Paris as malefactors, when we were rescued, only at the expense of one an arm, and the other of an eye."

"Pardon, messieurs!" and she cast herself at their feet. "I came to save you! I repent! I was beautiful but evil! The heart is not always good when the body is fair. I had a devil in me, like the magnificent Madeline. I will die! I am ready to surrender myself."

Ralph, at the door, had heard all this. By his information, in ten minutes, a constable was in the room. The French girl submitted herself with a look of pleasure to his power—seemed relieved to have taken the place of the innocent; and asking leave to kiss their hands, and praying their pardon in touching tones, she was led away. The next day she was given up to the French minister; and six weeks afterwards her beautiful head rolled in blood across the scaffold of the guillotine!

And here we will go on to say that the young Lord Eslington remained six weeks at the inn, lost his heart to Rose; and repaid her attention and devotion by making her in six months afterwards the Countess of Eslington, a position she honored both by her beauty and her virtues. The same day Ralph was united to Bettie, and Lord Beresford gave the bride away, resolved that since the fate of the lovely French assassin, he could never put faith in the beauty of women, and would content himself in giving away brides to his friends, but never taking one. The day Rose was married was marked by the execution upon the gallows of two men: of Robert Murray, (the young ruffian who insulted and struck her, as detailed in an early chapter), for the murder of Dame Hubbard at the castle to possess himself of a hundred pounds she had hoarded up; and of Simon, the Frenchman, for the brutal death of his sister, old Therese. But this hoary and depressed criminal made a confession in his cell, before being led to execution, which will have a bearing upon one of the closing scenes of our tale.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONCLUSION.

We will now return to the abbey, where we left Sir Paul Varney an invalid. If the beauty of Catharine Varney awakened in his breast the deepest admiration, no less was he impressed by the sweetness of her manners, the kindliness of her nature, her deep sympathies and devotion to him. Supposing her to be French, he never addressed her in English; and she, for the same cause, always spoke to him in the former language. Thus was he wholly removed from suspecting her to be his lost daughter.

Sometimes, as he would recline, half drowsy under the opiates administered to him, in a delicious state of langour, as she moved to and fro, it seemed to him just such a form and face had been mingled in his dreams long past!

After the first week he was easier, and able to converse. A mysterious sympathy (unknown to her the voice of nature) bound her to him. A score of times, as his look or voice made her think, she asked herself, "Is this love? Am I false to Louis?" And he, as he watched her, more deeply felt his heart interested in hers. In the meanwhile, Louis did not return; indeed, she had not heard from him! The twelfth of January was close at hand.

"My maid told me, monsieur, you knew Louis?" she said, as she drew the curtain so as to shade the sun from his eyes.

"I rented this house to him."

"Are you Sir Paul Varney?"

"Yes."

"My maid said Sir Paul de Varne. I have heard of you, sir. You are not French, then?" she said, with surprise. "Why, then, do you always speak in French?"

"Because you are French," he said, smiling.

"I—me, sir! I am not French!" she cried, with a beautiful laugh, and in the richest English.

"Not French! I see you are not, by your speech," he exclaimed. "This has been a singular mutual error."

"I am glad you are English, Sir Paul."

"And I that you are not French. May I ask your name? I have always addressed you as 'madame.' One can do so in French with ease, without knowing a name; but not so in English—one must have something after '*Mrs.*'"

"My name is Catharine," she said, in a manner so bewitching with her English, that he felt in his heart that if Louis never came back he must lay his fortune and title at her feet, if he found her birth was equal to her beauty.

"And your other name?"

She hesitated. "Hinchcliff" she had renounced: she had no other but "Pauline."

The next day, after long meditation upon her beauty and graces, he said:

"Catharine, are you betrothed to Louis?"

"Our hearts are one."

He felt a strong desire to urge his own awakening passion, when the door opened, and a person whom Lizette had softly let in, bounded across the room, and caught Pauline to his heart.

"Louis!" she screamed with joy that rung with no uncertain note. It came full and fresh from the heart.

"She loves him, and I have no hope," he sighed.

After the salutations of this happy meeting had passed, she looked at the count. He was pale, travel-worn, and looked as if a calamity had befallen him.

"I have been with Louis Napoleon to Boulogne. We hoped to be met by France in arms, and with arms. But it is a wretched failure. France is no more France. We must content to be exiles till a better day."

He bowed to Sir Paul, and hoped he was better. Lizette had told him all, and prepared him for the sight of the guest. He spoke kindly, and with sympathy. They had supper, and as they ate together, the baron envied their pure happiness.

After supper, Louis told Catharine he approved of all she had done for Sir Paul. He then told her that if she would marry on the twelfth, which was one day more to come——"

"On the evening of the twelfth, Louis? That day must pass."

"*Bien.*"

The count then sat by Sir Paul's couch, and told him of the compact, with the ease and genial volubility of his well-bred countrymen; related to him the affair at Boulogne, and explained the cause of its failure. "But," added, "it will be renewed. France will again be imperial!"

The next day Sir Paul said he felt that he could be removed, and expressed his unwillingness to trespass longer on the hospitality of strangers.

"We are friends," said the count, warmly. "Is it not your own house? We will be your guests, Sir Paul."

After awhile Sir Paul said:

"How beautiful and charming a creature is mademoiselle! It is very odd you are not married, yet live beneath the same roof in such honor, waiting for to-morrow, the twelfth."

The count at once explained how he had met Catharine at the French school—loved her—eloped with her from the Tower—and the compact between them.

Sir Paul listened to the concluding portion with eager and breathless attention.

"What name? You gave no name to this man—this turnkey."

"Hinchcliff."

"Call—call her in—pray call her!" he gasped out.

Alarmed, the count hastened to bring his betrothed.

"Have you any name besides Catharine?"

"Pauline, sir."

"Do you remember if you ever lived near Varney Castle?"

"Yes, sir, when a child; in a cottage by the brook below."

He could not speak. He stretched forth his arms with speechless eloquence. He murmured inaudibly: "God forgive me! what gulf have I been saved from! He then called out, with a broken, weeping voice:

"Come to my arms—embrace me, Catharine! I am your father! You are my child!"

The instinct of filial love within her responded. She flung herself upon her knees by his couch, and he folded her to his heart.

By-and-by he told her and Louis the following tale:

"Your mother was beautiful—next to yourself (and your likeness has haunted me like a vision of beauty) the fairest of women. I loved her with all my heart and being. We were both young. I cared not for the disparity in rank. She was as virtuous as she was lovely; and for her love I secretly married her. The witnesses and record are to be found. But my mother was haughty and my father proud. They heard of it. I weakly yielded to their threats, and connived wickedly at a plan that was proposed to save me from suspicion, and your mother's honor. For a stipulated sum this Hinchcliff (chosen for certain reasons known to my father) was induced to marry her really, but actually not to live with her as his wife! To save her own honor and name, she consented to this shameful tyranny, for which I cannot too severely censure myself. I then left for India. You were born, my child. In the eye of the world you were Hinchcliff. You know the rest. Forgive me! Could I rise, I would do so to kneel at your feet. I have wronged you—I have wronged your virtuous and noble mother. I have for many years sought you in vain, resolved, being childless, to make you the heiress of my domains. Providence has wonderfully guided me to you. Let me, by the reparation I shall make to you, my dear child, for the evils you have suffered from my folly, neglect and guilt, atone in some degree——"

"Nay, dear father, all is forgotten! If dear mother is near us she also forgives!" answered Catharine, weeping between joy and regrets.

Louis was deeply moved, partly with indignation at Sir Paul's conduct, partly with satisfaction.

At this moment a person was announced. It was Botany Bay Paul. He came accompanied by Eva. He asked to see Sir Paul alone. Eva stood at a little distance, and as her lovely face drew the attention of Catharine, (now the acknowledged Lady Catharine Varney, as our readers are all happy to hear, we know,) she drew her gently towards her, and asked her name.

"Eva—Eva Marie."

"A sweet name!"

The count thought the owner of it quite as sweet, as her drooping lids and blushing cheeks recognized modestly his ardent gaze.

"My Pauline, she looks like you."

"Like me?—I wish I were the half so pretty."

"Your mouth, and hair, and your very dimple in the left cheek."

In the meanwhile, Paul had said to the baron:

"Your worship, I heard you were here, and had broken your leg. John Hinchcliff told me."

"Where is that man?"

"Nobody knows, sir," answered Paul, shaking his head mysteriously. "He was taken out of my house mysteriously a week ago, by twelve men. They made no noise. They bound him, gagged him, and put him into a boat, and pulled away with him. It was a dark, stormy night. Some say he was tied up in a sack and drowned because he knew too much about the London Tower locks and keys; and now they've got the jewels back, with what they found on Lord Neagle, they want to keep 'em. One thing is certain—no living man'll ever lay eyes on John Hinchcliff. If he isn't dead, he's in a dungeon deeper than the bottom o' the Thames! A dangerous man, your worship."

Sir Paul assented. He felt relieved as he heard this, though he knew that his abduction would cost him eight thousand pounds as security to the magistrate.

"I've come, your honor, to ask you, Sir Paul, if you lost your wife in India?"

He stared, and looked startled. What could he say? If he recognized, as he had done, Anne Ross as his wife, his second marriage was not lawful. He answered—

"Why this singular inquiry?"

"Because a Frenchman was hanged last week for a murder. Four years ago he stole a young child, and made a drag-slave of her. That child I have adopted. There she stands in the door, talking with that handsome lady! This Frenchman told his priest that the child was not that of a man who brought it with him there and died in his house, but that the man had told him he had rescued the child from a tigress in India. The animal had the mother in his jaws, and the child held in one paw by the arm. The Frenchman, who was a musician in the army, shot the tigress and saved the child, but the mother was dead. He robbed her of her jewels, and took the child and reared her as his own, coming to this country with the money the jewels brought him. He was devoted to the child, but died in a wretched den, when it fell into the hands of the man who made this confession. The Frenchman said the woman and child were the wife and daughter of Colonel Sir Paul Varney!"

Sir Paul listened amazed. The host of the Sack Inn called to Eva, and presented her; and drawing up her sleeve, exhibited the scars of the claws of the tigress, saying—

"This must be your child, Sir Paul."

Catharine and the count listened with wonder.

"This must be my child!" cried Sir Paul. "I see her mother's eyes. What a day is this! Kiss me, my daughter! What is thy name?"

"Eva Marie."

"The very name of my lost infant! This Frenchman, then, knew us, but would not reveal the rescue of our child! Come, and let me fold another daughter—two lovely flowers in one day—to my father's heart."

After some further conversation, in which Paul heard Sir Paul acknowledge that this child could not be his heir, being illegitimate, the former then insisted on retaining her, as having as good a title to her, and better; for only a week before, in the presence of a magistrate, he had adopted her, and given the lawful bonds and sureties. At last it was decided—very sadly by her father, whose heart went out to her—that she should remain with Paul, but he would educate her becoming her true father's rank.

The next evening, being that of the twelfth of January, the Count Louis—who proved to be a prince of the house of Napoleon—was married to the beautiful and virtuous Lady Catharine Varney, her father giving her away. And Eva Marie (whom Catharine had began to love as an own sister) was the juvenile bride-maid. And present, also, was Botany Bay Paul, feeling his advanced respectability and importance, and resolved, from that day, for Eva's sake, if not from principle, to be as honest a man as there was in the three kingdoms. Sir Paul, on his recovery, gave up gaming, repaired to his castle, and passed his time between it and London, where his daughter resided in the abbey—now superbly fitted up as a metropolitan palace, the home of taste and elegance, and the place of reunion for distinguished French exiles and men of talent and genius of all nations.

That Absalom, the handsome Israelite, married the beautiful Ketura need hardly be recorded. And the London papers, in speaking of the marriage, which took place in a crowded synagogue, said that no such magnificent ceremony had ever before been performed in London, as well for the wealth and beauty of the bride and bridegroom, their rank in their nation—the bride being a lineal descendant of the house of David—as for the splendor of the arrangements. "The loss," added the journal, "of the father of the bridegroom of one hundred thousand pounds sterling of the advance made to the unhappy Earl of Conybeare, did not seem to diminish the cost or hilarity of this imposing occasion."

We have now but three or four more of our prominent characters to allude to in concluding our Tale. These are the earl, his daughter, Sir Villiers, and Lord Neagle.

The following paragraphs, from the *London Times* of February 6th and 8th, will unfold all the information regarding them which the reader can desire to possess:—

> The Earl of Conybeare, we learn, after a private examination before the commissioner appointed for the purpose by the crown, is proven to be insane; and is to be given into the charge of the Governor of the Lunatic Asylum as a patient; the latter to be held responsible for him as for a State prisoner. Lord Neagle's trial begins to-morrow.
>
> 8th. The public mind received an indignant shock this morning on learning that Lord Neagle, on his cell being opened early this morning to take him out for trial, was found dead, hanging to the iron grate of his window by his cravat. He was immediately cut down, but life was extinct, and he had evidently been dead some hours. Thus has justice been defrauded of her claim upon one of the most dissolute and criminal nobles whose crimes have disgraced the peerage.
>
> March 18th. Evening edition.—We learn that yesterday in St. Barnabas Chapel, Sir Villiers Courtney, Colonel in her Majesty's —— Regiment of Cavalry, was married to lady Isabel Conybeare, countess of Inglis, daughter of the late unfortunate Lord Inglis, who died four weeks ago insane in the asylum near Greenwich. The bride was arrayed in deep mourning; and the parties immediately started for the continent, where they intend permanently to reside.

Seven years later a London paper published the following:—

> MARRIED.—Israel Levi David, Esq., a wealthy young Israelite, to Eva Maria, the beautiful adopted daughter of Sir Paul Varney. The bride has adopted the Jewish faith.

Three years before this Botany Bay Paul had gone to rejoin, we trust, his daughter beloved in a better world than this, leaving all his goods to Eva, who from that day became the living and dutiful child of her father, Sir Paul, who joyfully took her to his own home, and centered upon her the affections of his heart, or rather dividing them with Catharine, now the Princess of L * * * * and her loving boy and girl, the eldest called Louis, the youngest Anne, after her unhappy grandmother.

One evening about the close of the year 1853, the Prince of L * * * *, the fair Princess Catharine and her two little children, with Lizette in charge of them, were walking in the public gardens at Brussels, the Prince a little in advance, when a mendicant, gray and wretchedly apparelled, drew near, and bending low with his hand over his heart, asked the princess for alms. She was about to give him a piece of silver from her purse, when withdrawing his hand from his heart, a hitherto concealed dagger glittered in his fierce grasp; and springing upon her with the cry, "Remember John Hinchcliff!" he would have buried the weapon in her breast, but for Lizette, who with a shriek interposed her person and saved the life of her mistress by sacrificing her own, falling dead at her feet with the steel in her bosom.

The next moment the swords of three officers who were passing by were sheathed in his heart, and with a curse of impotent vengeance upon his lips, the wretched turnkey of the Tower, after escaping from its lowest dungeon by mining out, fell a corpse at the feet of her whom he had begged his way over half of Europe to destroy.

THE END.

* * *

PLEASURES OF CONTENTMENT.—I have a rich neighbor who is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money. He is still drudging on, saying that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich." And it is true, indeed; but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy, for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "that there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." We see but the outside of the rich man's happiness; few consider him to be like the silkworm, that, when he seems to play, is at the very same time spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself. And this many rich men do—loading themselves with corroding cares, to keep what they have already got. Let us, therefore, be thankful for health and competence, and above all, for a quiet conscience.

* * *

INDUSTRY.—All exertion is in itself delightful, and active amusement seldom tires us. Helvetius owns that he could hardly listen to a concert for two hours, though he could play on an instrument all day long. In all pursuits, efforts, it must not be forgotten, are as indispensable as desires. The globe is not to be circumnavigated by one wind. We should never do nothing. "It is better to wear out than to rust out," says Bishop Cumberland. "There will be time enough for repose in the grave," said Arnauld to Nicole. In truth, the proper rest for man is occupation.

* * *

BAD SOIL.—He that sows his grain upon marble will have many a hungry belly before his harvest.

AMERICAN THEMES.

Opening for a National Poem.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

I hear the chant of forests far away;
I hear the hymn of rivers, and the roar
Of two great oceans under night and day—
The Sun and Moon, each with a mighty shore:
I see the Alleghanies towering hoar
With solemn centuries; I behold a throng
Of many nations everlasting pour
Down far-off mountains, like a festal song—
Away, then, world of Eld! I to the New belong

II.

I would from it my inspiration woo—
From it a deep, unborrowed meaning learn,
Why should a bard the ghost of Eld pursue
Round Afric's pyramid, or Europe's urn?
O, here his heart can more devoted burn,
For him the lakes; for him Kentucky's bowers;
For him Niagara; for him the kern
Of empires gone 'mid Alabama's flowers:
Here Vernon grandly calls, and Monticello towers!

III.

Here things are fresh as in that primal hour,
When the first rainbow took the clouds, and told
Peace to the tribes; here smiles a patient power
O'er mighty States; but Europe, pale and old,
Is awful with white hairs—the slave of gold,
And creeds, as drear as dust on coffin-lid—
A royal mummy in dim parchment rolled.
Oh that God's Freedom would arise, and bid
His earthquakes trample up and burst the Pyramid!

IV.

Here all are monarchs, and 'tis mine to think;
Here men are chainless, and I must be free;
Here tyrants vainly piled the Rebel's brink;
Here thoughts go through the mind unceasingly,
As summer winds sweep through a mighty tree
That rules the precipice, nor fears the deep
Yawning below; here, from the mount to sea,
My soul shall not a narrow compass keep!
But with the imperial sun o'er boundless regions sweep

V.

Yet not for Nature's sake each scene alone:
A thousand glorious deeds have waited long
For verse that in the old, heroic tone,
Shall lift them to that old, heroic throng
Which the world worships: thus no more the wrong
Of harpless silence. Welcome thou my lyre,
However young, thou roll'st a native song,
At which the sabre of my soldier-sire
Clangs on the startled wall, and flashes olden fire

New York, 1858.

* * *

THE OLD TRAPPER'S STORY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

At Independence, Missouri—that grand rendezvous for traders, trappers, travelers, emigrants, Indians, and, in short, for all going to, or returning from, the Far West—I once met an old mountaineer by the name of Glass—John Glass—though he looked as little like glass as any substance I can think of. In fact, John clearly showed, in his weather-beaten, scar-disfigured face, that his had been "a hard road to travel." Indeed, on second thought, I hardly know as I am justified in saying that John Glass had any face at all; but he had a head, and the front part of that head much resembled one side of an overgrown badly-white-washed gourd—a portion of the nose and original skin having been removed, leaving in place a kind of cicatrized surface, which a great amount of weather, and a total absence of soap and water, had turned to a color that I find comparable with nothing except the aforesaid vegetable.

I was not at that time acquainted with John personally; but being somewhat fascinated by his appearance, I begged an introduction, which was readily accorded by one having the honor of some familiarity with this nondescript specimen of the wilderness.

"I say, old hoss, hyer's a settlement chap as wants to know you a few," were the words which brought the attention of John Glass fully upon myself, and was my only form of presentation to the scarified mountaineer.

"Wall, stranger, you kin know me a heap, ef you're civil," was the reply of my new acquaintance, spoken in a tone that sounded not unlike the gurgling of water from a jug. "Chaw, hoss?" he added, inquiringly, having, like many another individual I wot of, an eye to the profits which might accrue from my acquaintance.

I instantly took the hint, and a plug of tobacco from my pocket, and handing the latter to my new friend, I obsered that he had better keep the whole of it, as I had a sufficiency left.

"Hurraw!" cried the old trapper. "You're a trump, you ar, and I'd play you agin any amount of dandified jimcracks I ever seed. You're a hoss as has bottom, or else I'm a wolf—hurraw!"

I saw I had made a good impression on my *outre* friend of the wilderness, and I naturally argued, that if a plug of tobacco could do that much, a little whiskey would do more. So, after a few exchanges of civilities, in which I endeavored to compliment John as much as he had me, I mildly suggested that we might as well take a drink.

"Hurraw!" he cried, in his broadly accented dialect, "you're one on 'em, stranger, and old peeled Jack is one as likes to know you. Drink? In course I will—and ef you kin jest find the fellow as says John Glass ever was knowed to refuse to drink when ax'd, you'll see a fight."

Accordingly, we adjourned to one of that kind of institutions in which these rough borderers most do congregate; and, having called together a few of John's friends, we chartered a corner of the shanty for that especial occasion. The whiskey having been brought forward, in due proportion to the number and quality of the guests, who at once paid their respects to it, pipes were next in order; and each man having loaded, prepared to fire—and did fire—and such a volume of smoke I never before beheld except at the discharge of a regular battery.

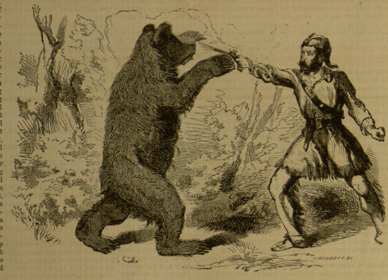
My sole object in this operation was to hear from the lips of John Glass himself how it had happened that his figure-head had become so seriously damaged; and so, seizing the first favorable opportunity, I broached the subject in a quiet way.

"Wal, stranger," said John, "that was one o' the scrapes. Hey, Bill," he added, turning to one of his companions, "you remembers that thar, I reckon?"

"Wal, I does, hoss," returned the other; "and ef I didn't think you war dead that time, may I never see the Rocky agin!"

"Yes, Bill," pursued Glass, "you thought as how I war dead; and it's like you warn't glad to find it different, for you'd got my hoss and gun all snug enough. But you see, when John Glass goes under, thar's gwine to be an 'arthquake; and thar warn't nary 'arthquake then. Stranger," he added, filling his glass and turning to me, "I'll just tell you how it war, for you're right decent for a settlement feller, and decency ought to be encouraged. You see, stranger, it war a good many years ago—I don't exactly remember how many—that me and a party war gwine out to the mountains. Wal, we'd fixed up for a reg'lar trapping expedition, and had our hosses and mules, and all the rest o' our kit along, for a reg'lar three months' hunt. We got over onto the Black Hills without any accident, which war some'at to talk about for us, kase, we didn't often go fur without them things. I say we got over onto the Black Hills, and pitched our camp in one o' the purtiest places I ever seed, whar we kind o' spread ourselves to make beaver come. Me and Bill, here—the old hoss—paired off, kind o' partner like, and did business in our own way, and that thar way war some.

"One day, as we war off that thar way together, setting our traps along a stream whar the beaver raythe seemed to like the fun, for they allers kim smelling round, looking pleased and curious, we got kind o' tangled up in a thicket o' wild cherry, which growed along the stream. I war pushing along a leetle a head o' Bill, when all at once't, as I kim to a kind o' opening, I seed a big grizzly, as quiet as a kitten, turning up the 'arth with his nose for the roots as laid below.



"'Hurraw, Bill!' says I, 'hyer's fun, and thar's meat.'

"'What's the muss, Jack?' says Bill, hurrying up to me.

"I showed him the b'ar about twenty yards off, and we agreed as how we'd draw his blood.

"Now, stranger," continued the old trapper, turning to me, "them thar grizzlys is some."

"In a bear fight," I quietly suggested.

"Exactly—haw! haw! haw!" laughed the mountaineer. "They're some in a b'ar fight—just so; and you're some punks, any whar. Wal, as I was a saying, we fetched our rifles to an aim, and both spoke together. We both hit old grizzly plum center; but them is critters as don't mind hitting, and our shots didn't seem to do no more nor jest kind o' rile up his dander. He kind o' started up and looked round, as savage as Old Nick; and then, seeing our smoke curling up from the thicket, he know'd thar was some'at for him thar, and broke for us like a streak o' greased lightning.

"'Hurraw, Bill!' says I, 'we're in for't now. We'll be made meat on, sure as shooting.'

"'Wal, we will, old hoss,' says Bill, 'onless our legs is longer nor the b'ar's.'

"'It's a run now, anyway,' says I, as we both on us made a break through the thicket.

"Bill was behind me afore, but he was ahead o' me now; and ef he didn't do some tall walking then, I never seed snakes. Hey, Bill?"

"Wal, I did, Jack," grinned Bill, who was himself nearly as pretty a specimen of the wilderness as the narrator.

"We both on us tore through the bushes like mad," resumed the old mountaineer; "but they was awful thick together, I tell you, and we didn't git along not nigh so fast as I has afore now, tumbling down hill; and we didn't get along not nigh so fast as the cussed old b'ar, who kim plunging arter us like a mad bull, gaining on us at every jump. Maybe as how I didn't swar some at them thar old bushes, which stuck into me at every leap, and kind o' kept me from gitting any whar, with old grizzly puffing up close behind.

"At last we got to t'other side o' the thicket, whar thar was a patch o' prairie, and a big steep bluff on t'other side on't, about a hundred yards off.

"'Hurraw, Bill!' says I, 'it's bluff or die, for old grizzly has got kantankerous, and he ain't so fur behind but what he mought hear us holler. 'Leg it, Bill!' says I; 'let your pegs do their duty.'

"And Bill, here, he did leg it, for he'd got the legs as could leg it; and I didn't keep a great ways behind. But the old varmint, he gained on us all through the bushes, and when I struck that thar prairie I hadn't more'n twenty feet the start o' him. I'd hev cleared old Bruin, though, easy enough, but jest as I got half way to the bluff I struck my infernal foot agin a stone, and kim down headlong. I got up agin right sudden, but it war too late for running now, for jest as I got on my feet the old scamp stood straight up alongside o' me, and reached out his paws for a hug, like some o' the old Frenchmen I've seed out thar. I know'd old grizzly's hug warn't for any good, though; but seeing as thar warn't no help for't, I kind o' made up my mind to it, and gin him the contents o' the only pistol I had, at the same time yelling to Bill to load up and settle him.

"I'd jest got the words out, when old grizzly got his paws onto me, and with one infernal rake downwards tore off skin enough for a leather apron. I drawed my knife, said some'at o' prayers, and pitched into him with all my might, and we went rolling over and over on the grass, sometimes the b'ar topmost, and sometimes me.

"That thar, boys, is purty much all I know about the fight," pursued Glass; "but some time next day I opened my peepers agin, wiped off the blood, and found I war the wust-looking human you ever seed. My old scalp hung clean over my face—the skin o' my face, and the most o' this here nose, war spread out all around me; I'd been dug into clean down to the ribs, which looked as ef they'd been peeled; and more'n all that, some thieving scamp—(Bill, here, kin tell you who that war)—had stripped off the most o' my clothing, and tuk my pistol, and rifle, and every —— thing away."

"Yes," said Bill, "I'll jest tell you how it war, boys—I jest thought as how Glass war dead, and I run down to camp and told 'em so, and old Sublette told me and Rube to go back and bury him. We went back, and tuk his things; but concluding thar warn't no use o' settling him into the turf, we put back and told the boys as how we'd done it; but we hadn't, and Jack warn't dead, he warn't."

"No, sir-ee!" chimed in Glass—"nor I didn't want to die, nuther. Wall, I kind o' looked around like, and seed as how old grizzly had got rubbed out, and that thar was some satisfaction, anyhow."

Here Glass took still another glass, smacked his lips, and continued.

"Ef I war to tell you all that happened arter that, I'd keep you here till morning—so I won't. The short on't is, I jest tore up my shirt, and did up my wounds as well as I could, and then lay round thar, feeding on old grizzly for a good many days, till I got strength to crawl away. The boys, I reckoned, had changed their camp, and so I sot out for a fort as I knowed was about ninety miles off; and I tell you what it is, that thar war one o' the wust tramps as ever this hyer old beaver seed; for I war all cut up, almost skinned, and had to feed on roots and berries all the way.

"At last I got to the fort, and some jimcrack of a doctor sot to work on me; and, stranger, I kim out as good as new, as you kin see for yourself. I managed to git another hoss, and then started for another fort, whar I knowed the boys would be coming in to winter. We both got thar about the same time; and a skeerder-looking set o' white niggers nor them war, when they seed me, as they knowed war dead and buried, coming up astraddle o' that thar old hoss, this hyer child never put his eyes on.

"'Hurraw, Bill,' says I, as I seed him quaking, and trying to git out o' sight—for the scamp knowed as he war guilty, and I guessed it—'I'll jest kind o' trouble you for that thar hoss, and gun, and the rest o' my fixings.'

"Bill handed 'em over, and I tuk my place among the boys, ready for the next thing as mought turn up.

"Thar, stranger," concluded the old mountainer, "you knows now why I looks so purty; and so now let's liquor agin, afore we spile."

I subsequently ascertained that this story of John Glass was true in every particular; and I give it as a specimen of what human nature—and especially human nature as found in the wilderness of the Far West—can endure and survive.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ *All the back numbers of the* LEDGER, *from June 7th, 1856, up to the present date, can be had at our office, in quantities or by the single copy*

EMMA.—It is Emma's misfortune to have married an inveterate snorer. This fatal fact could not well have been revealed before the indissoluble knot was tied. Emma would not have married an angel if she had known him to be a snorer. (Angels never snore.) From night till morning the most unearthly howlings proceed from his nose. Poor Emma can get no sleep, and is as tired as a plough horse in the morning. Towards morning he turns on his back, sets his mouth open, and absolutely roars, snorts, snarls, and squeaks most hideously. Emma, when she is asking for a cure, should mention that her husband enjoys perfect health, and is temperate and industrious, but *still he snores!* It is a sad fate, and the more so that there is no sympathy, no pity, no compassion from the world. The inhuman world only laughs. Yet who can describe the amount of suffering patiently and silently endured under such circumstances? What can be the meaning, the mission of snoring? It must have some commission. Perhaps it is to teach the world that each person should have a bed to himself! Perhaps it is sent, like any other affliction, merely to disturb our peace, and weary us of the world! The worst of it is that the snorer is happy. He only gets a punch in the side occasionally, at which he gives a grunt like a pig, and recommences his solo. It is a sad burlesque upon music. When Sancho said, "Blessed be the man who first invented sleep," did he include the snoring? Most probably Sancho himself was a snorer, and heard it not. We know no cure for snoring. It seems to arise from a peculiar formation, but is aggravated by circumstances, such as colds, etc. Stoutness is unfavorable to it, and so is weariness, or hard work. It is a frightful thing. The most beautiful woman in the world would look deformed when snoring. But then all the world snores; it is one of the primitive curses, and Emma must console herself with that reflection. It is a bitter; but bitters are medicinal.

PAWTUCKET.—We do not wish to engage contributors who are unknown to us. The fact that a person is "out of health and unable to work for a livelihood," is no recommendation to us as an employer; on the contrary, we regard it as a serious disqualification. In engaging contributors we permit no eleemosynary considerations to influence us. Business, friendship, and charity we keep entirely dissevered until the question of *ability* has been satisfactorily determined. And when we say "ability," we mean the particular kind of ability which we value and consider the best for our purposes. Thackeray is undoubtedly a man of very great ability, but we would not give him fifty dollars for the best work he ever wrote; in fact, we would not publish one of his stories in the LEDGER for a good many dollars, because not one person in a thousand cares anything about reading his works. That a thing is "good" is not enough for us; it must be so intensely attractive that the public, that is, the *mass of the people*, will admire and appreciate it.

JULIA wishes to have a question which she has been for a long time discussing put at rest. It is this: "Is to-day at *this* time the same time it was yesterday at *this* time?" In other words, is four o'clock in the afternoon of January 9th the same identical relative moment of time that four o'clock in the afternoon of January 10th is? Julia says no, and summons to her aid the various revolutions of the earth, the precession of the equinoxes, and all the astronomical hosts, and wants to know if any one of the million or so readers of the LEDGER can prove the affirmative. Will any of the "million" try?

ADA.—Lovers' quarrels and misunderstandings do no lasting harm, and if one should for this reason obstinately refuse to come to a reconciliation, the other party should be congratulated for having escaped marriage with a person of such bad temper and disposition. As for asking for miniatures that have been "promised," &c., we say don't do it. A promised gift or any other courtesy, should not be treated as a debt and be *dunned* for. Its chief value to a mind not vulgar depends upon the voluntariness of its bestowal and the *spirit* in which it is given.

YOUNG AMERICA wishes to know "what to say to a girl when you want to ask her to go a riding with you, or to a party, or to let you escort her home?" These are serious matters to young men generally as well as to "Young America" particularly. But they are serious only in imagination. There is no *real* difficulty except a modest young man's diffidence. Girls are *very* charitable in such matters, and only demand that the "request" or "offer" shall be intelligible. The fewest and simplest words are the best.

THREE SCHOOL-BOYS wish to know how to overcome the embarrassment of addressing an audience, and how to discipline their minds so as to be able to compose readily, as they have to address an audience once a week. Hard study and practice will enable you to accomplish both of these most trying duties triumphantly.

D. C.—You should adopt the business you like the best. A man cannot succeed eminently in an occupation of which he is not proud, and into the prosecution of which his whole heart does not enter.

CHARLES LUTE.—There is such a tree as the "Upas." It grows on the Island of Java. It is not so poisonous and destructive of animal and vegetable life as is popularly supposed. Two adventurous English travelers passed a night in the branches of one a few years ago; one of them felt no bad effect from the experiment, but the other was afflicted with nausea, dizziness, and a pain in the head, during the following day, but he could not say whether the Upas had anything to do with it or not.

WAVERLY.—It is customary for lovers on becoming engaged to make such presents to each other as they can afford to give. There is no particular article that is more appropriate for such a purpose than any other, except it be the "engagement ring," which the lover gives his sweetheart.

SCHOOL-GIRL.—It is customary to begin both words in the commencement of a letter, as "Dear Mother," "Dear Brother," "Dear Sir," &c., with capital letters.

PHILIP LANCEY.—It is often difficult and sometimes impossible to cure paralysis. You need the special aid of a competent physician. Beware of nostrums and quack "remedies." They are always mischievous and often fatal.

WEYMOUTH.—Children should have plenty of fresh air, and be permitted to play, run, jump, and exercise out of doors as much as possible; care, of course, being taken to clothe them as the weather demands. It is cruel to keep them shut up in ill-ventilated rooms.

INQUIRER.—You can as yet do nothing with your wife. Should she persist in such conduct, and obstinately absent herself from home, you could get a divorce "from bed and board."

BALTIC.—You were inexcusably in the fault in the quarre with your father. No matter how exasperating soever his conduct and conversation, you should not have raised your hand against him. *That* is nearly as unpardonable as anything can be. If you really loved your mother as you profess to do, you would soon ask your father's forgiveness, and compass a reconciliation with him at any sacrifice of "dignity," as you call it. In such an unnatural quarrel, she must of course take the side of her husband, and whatever the event, her heart will be torn with agony. Your "friend," as you call your bad-tempered cousin, is evidently using you for his own selfish purposes. It may be that he hopes to bring about such a breach between you and your father that the latter will disinherit you, that *he* may stand a chance of getting some of the old gentleman's wealth. Such things have been done.

CANTAB says that on visiting a neighbor, his horse was put into the barn alongside of a couple of other horses, the stalls being well partitioned, the neighbor fed them all, and then the visitor and his host entered the house. In a little while the horses began to kick and make a noise, and on going to the barn one of the neighbor's horses was found with the hind leg next the visitor's horse broken, and the partition between them kicked down. Question: can the owner of the maimed horse make his visitor pay for him, on the ground that his leg was broken by a kick from the horse of the visitor? No, it could not be established that the visitor's horse did the damage. The horse might have broken his own leg in kicking against the partition. Even if it could be established beyond question that the visitor's horse broke the other's leg in a mutual kicking match, it is doubtful if damages could be recovered of his owner.

ALLEGHANY quotes, "Keep thy *heart* with all diligence, for out of it cometh the issues of life:" "The *heart* is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and then asks, what we understand by the word "heart" in the passages quoted? It means the chief, the vital, the governing part or quality of man or of human nature—the very focus and turning-point of all the affections, fears, hopes, and passions: and that this "is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," that "out of it cometh the issues of life"—that is, that, among other things, it gives the bent and character to our life, and that, for these reasons, we should "keep it with diligence," is perfectly clear to every body who is not wilfully blind.

A CONSTANT READER.—You cannot get a divorce in any State of the Union, unless you become a resident of such State. In Florida you can get a divorce in six months, for almost any reason. In Ohio and Indiana they also have expeditious means of cutting the marriage tie. We cannot go into particulars as to the course of procedure, the expense, &c., as that would be equivalent to making a number of the LEDGER a treatise on divorce. When you arrive at the place where you wish to begin your suit, put the matter in the hands of a lawyer, and he will soon set you free. The expense would not amount to over a hundred dollars. The facts you mention would be sufficient to enable you to get a divorce "from bed and board" even in this State.

PORT HURON.—You should not yield to your wife's unreasonable exactions upon your time, but attend strictly to your business during business hours. At the same time, you must be gentle and loving with her, else the difficulty may result in the lasting unhappiness of both. She probably had very silly and romantic notions about love and marriage, and supposed that a husband would spend all his time in petting and caressing his wife. Of course she must give up all such rose-colored sentimentalism, and come down to—or rather come *up* to mixing bread and paring potatoes. If you treat her properly, she will come out all right by the time she has rocked the cradle a fortnight.

BESSIE.—It is too delicate a subject to advise upon. Besides, would Bessie take our advice? She has got an offer from one man, but she is in love with another. Whether do people live longest and happiest in love or marriage? Answer that, Bessie. Everything seems to prove that love is a miserable state, for lovers are always quarreling, always fidgeting, and always reproaching and suspecting one another. Whereas, married folks are as quiet as cats, one on this side of the fire and the other on that, toasting their toes on the fender and snoring quite comfortable.

D. S. C. H.—No. When money is lost in the United States mail, even if it was registered, there is no remedy. The government will not pay it back. On being notified of its loss, they will do all they can to find your fifty dollars, but if not found you will have to lose it, unless the firm to whom it was sent authorized the sending of it by mail, in which case *they* will have to stand the loss.

PENNSYLVANIA.—You take the girl's anger too seriously. She is probably "making believe." You should console yourself with the reflection that her "forgiveness," as you call it, is not of the slightest consequence. Your request was not an insult, and she was very foolish to make such a fuss about it.

G. C. says that in Gallatin, Missouri, fifty girls are wanted to do the housework in as many families, to whom good wages will be given, and wants to know how they can be obtained. We publish the fact, so the girls can take the affair into their own hands.

W. N. G.—It is a dangerous piece of business for a man to marry a woman who does not love him, and then "trust to unremitting devotion to win her affections." He had better try the "unremitting devotion" thoroughly *before* marriage.

ABSALOM.—It is impossible for us to give you any assistance in your endeavors to find at what time the dispersed Jews will be re-united in Palestine, and their race be restored to the possession of its former glory.

GIDEON.—You can get a volume of the LEDGER bound for seventy-five cents. We do not trouble ourselves about the interests and schemes of any political party

CONNUBIAL.—We must refer you to the bookseller's advertisements for the works you wish. We do not make a practice of catalogueing and puffing any kind of merchandise.

W. F. M.—You can best learn the sculptor's art in Italy It would cost you $400 a year to live there economically, and pursue your studies.

S. F. G.—You cannot get a divorce in the State of Massachusetts under the circumstances you name.

STEAMBOAT.—You can obtain the information you seek by referring to the advertising columns of the daily papers.

PRAIRIE.—There is but one way to learn positively if the girl loves you, and that is, to ask her Don't be afraid.

S. J. D.—Yes; a letter to "The Hon. Secretary of War," at Washington, would reach that gentleman.

LUCINDA.—Take your mother's advice, and delay your marriage until you are past eighteen.

H. R.—Stop chewing tobacco and consult a physician.

ISABEL CARLTON is in love, cannot sleep, and takes no interest in the society of any person but one, and that one does not reciprocate her love—perhaps does not know or suspect it. It is a hard fate, that of woman, to be doomed to silence in such circumstances, and she is very apt to imagine that man is much more fortunate than she is, as he can speak his mind and terminate his suspense. But man suffers as much as woman—from silence, too. Woman can speak as well as man; but then she replies, "It is indelicate, unwomanly;" but in the man's case it may be imprudent, unmanly. He loves, but is not prepared for marriage. He has not the courage to undertake the provision for a family in his present circumstances. Love says "Speak;" but Prudence says "Silence." Now, prudence in men of honorable principles is as strong a passion as modesty in women. Young ladies have a better chance of marriage than young gentlemen. There are more ladies married than men; for men more frequently than women marry a second time. Of a family of four boys and four girls, the chances of marrying are in favor of the girls, and it is more probable that all the four girls will be married than all the four boys—the chances have even been calculated as one in seventy-nine in favor of the girls. It may be small comfort to one sex to be told that the other suffers quite as much, but it is no easy matter to obtain great comfort in any trouble, for then the trouble itself would cease. Sorrow has its mission from above; it softens the heart and admits the sympathetic and benevolent feelings which are apt to be shut out under the reign of gayety. We cannot tell how to cure love. It will cure itself in time. Perhaps three months hence it will be gone.

EUNICE is quite right. Old maids are treated very unjustly by their own sex—the children of Cain, as she calls some of them. The unmarried portion of mankind are really the most philanthropic. All our noble, charitable, and educational establishments, with few exceptions, owe their existence to celibacy. Married people are all for themselves and their families. Mankind is the family of the unmarried. When the old maids have plenty of money, they have doses of flattery from their expectant friends. We have seen enough of this to disgust us with humanity. But it is all to prevent them from exercising that larger distributive species of benevolence to which celibacy is naturally inclined, and the greatest check upon which is the importunacy of family relations. Even the monomania of old maids has, in general, more grandeur and dignity about it than that of married women. It has humanity for its object, humbling the rich, delivering the poor, and redeeming the world, whereas a mother, when she goes mad, as well as when she is ordinarily sane, only thinks of making her son Tom President, and marrying her daughter to a millionaire.

MADALINE is a younger sister of several sisters, and she is very much persecuted by them. If any gentleman at a ball should do her the honor of dancing with her more than once, she has to endure a volley of whispers and frowns from her elder sisters on the lightness of her behaviour. She is called a heartless flirt, and even worse than that sometimes. Women are severe critics of one another. They reserve all their sweetness for their *own*. "My own" is a woman's favorite expression, and to her own there is no creature so indulgent, but to another none so severe, austere, and even cruel. It cannot be helped. Nature has so fashioned woman. It is this very peculiarity that fits her for domestic life, and makes her embrace her home. Man is more distributive in his affections, for he is destined for the world more and for home less. Madaline must play her own game as well as she can. It is her battle of life. We have all our own battles to fight.

HENRIETTA.—"What becomes of all the pins that are used in New York?" This, like the most of the ladies' questions, is very difficult to answer. "What becomes of all the flies, and where do they all come from?" A lady asked this question not long ago at table, and a gentleman asserted that they came from eggs, and that the hen flies hatched them. "But then," she replied, "if that were the case, we should see the hen flies walking about with the little chick flies, and feeding them." "Well, so you may," he replied, "I have seen them often." There is a great deal of science to learn yet; and amongst the rest of the undiscovered facts, is the ladies' pins. What becomes of them? The smallest things are the most mysterious. Everybody knows when the elephant dies. But a thousand millions of flies visit New York yearly, and nobody knows where they come from nor whither they go.

AN AFFLICTED MOTHER.—We can give you no advice as to the proper treatment of your daughter's curvature of the spine. It demands the skill of a physician. For the benefit of mothers in general we will add that a medical correspondent attributes the high shoulder and the lateral curvature of the spine, which so frequently disfigure young females, to the shoulder-straps of their dresses resting below the shoulder and on the muscles of the arm, instead of being on the shoulder, which compels the wearer to be constantly hitching her shoulder to keep up her dress, an action that results in the forcing up of the shoulder, a distortion of the chest, and a lateral curvature of the spine. He also states that from this dangerous practice, and the consequent exposure of the chest to cold, that inward tubercles are formed, and not unfrequently consumption is engendered.

IDA is over-sensitive, we fear, in relation to the treatment she receives. We hope she is equally sensitive in relation to that which she gives. Some people are sensitive for themselves, some for others, and some for themselves and others. The last are the best sort of people, for they not only require respectful and kind treatment, but they give it. We have no reason to suspect that Ada is not one of the last; but we think she is over-sensitive in her interpretation of words which are seldom studied, often spoken at random, and as often misinterpreted. As for slander and tittle-tattle, who can prevent the ladies from indulging in it? Is Ada herself perfectly innocent? Laugh at it good-naturedly, and it will blunt its edge; but fretting only sharpens it, like diamond dust.

EMILINE.—We know of no cure for the toothache, but a lady correspondent sends us the following recipe which she says is very efficacious:—Take two poppy heads, to be had at any druggist's, break them and put the seeds into a sauce-pan, with about half a handful of cammomile flowers, to which add about a pint of water; boil these and strain through a hair sieve. With this decoction wash the teeth and gums with a soft brush whenever the teeth become sore, which is usually the forerunner of the toothache. Although not yet twenty, I have been a very great sufferer from it; but latterly, having used the above on the first symptom appearing, it has invariably afforded relief. I forgot to say, very hot meats or drinks, as well as the other extreme, should be carefully avoided.

JULIAN.—"The very scheme and model of the administration of common justice *was* entirely settled by the king." Are these words of Judge Blackstone grammatically correct? Yes, quite. Scheme and model are not two things, but one; they were one in the mind of the judge when he used *was* instead of *were*. Thus Othello says,

> "The very head and front of my offending
> *Hath* this extent, no more."

Here head and front are one, only front is a particular aspect of the head. The same may be said of scheme and model, will and testament. "This is the last will and testament," &c Judging, however, by the strict pedantic rule of grammar, it is wrong.

HARVARD.—It matters not which edition of Euclid's *Elements* you use. Take the easiest come by, and don't waste time over such trifles. What did our ancestors do with so small a choice? The more books the less learning. People are confounded with the variety of names and of recommendations. As for the first motto, it means, "Before whomsoever pleading my cause my mind is the same." The second "Honor follows him unwillingly." To be followed, we suppose. But the meaning of many Latin mottoes is partly to be guessed, and is sometimes very equivocal, as they very often do not form sentences, being without a verb.

MARY BERTRAM is twenty-six years of age, and is anxious to get married, but knows not how, as she is intimate only with old maids. If she knows maids only, she is certainly not on the right road to matrimony. She says she is very shy and modest, and asks if it would be prudent to play a bolder game, and make a few advances. It is an old saying that marriages are made in heaven, which puts them out of the reach of our influence or counsel. We know not how to advise Mary, except to wait heaven's own time; but we hope she will never resolve to lay aside the retiring modesty of her sex, and usurp the office of the man. Few men are so simple as not to perceive and detest this.

JOSEPHINE.—It is better for a married lady always to go with her husband to balls and parties. At a private ball, a lady cannot refuse the invitation of a gentleman to dance, unless she be previously engaged to another. If her objection to the gentleman who makes the request be insuperable, she must decline dancing in that set altogether, and must sit it out. To decline the invitation of one gentleman and accept that of another, would betray a preference that no lady ought to suffer to appear, or else wound the feelings of one who sought her favor.

JUPITER.—No general recipe for indigestion can be given, as constitutions vary. Brown bread is a most efficacious remedy with some people, who by the use of it have been enabled to dispense entirely with medicine. But it does not succeed with all. Each man requires (in part) to become his own physician. Our Creator seems to have ordained that individual judgment should be exercised in all circumstances, and that general rules should not be wholly sufficient for particular cases.

EMMA LOUISE.—Your engaged lover, who is in California, sent his portrait to a young lady acquaintance—not to you. Such conduct is very unlover like, and we should think Mr. P. somewhat of a scamp. But such perversions are all owing to emigration. How can a man be the same, when under the influence of the gold mania.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*